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ABSTRACT

This document is comprised of the 1997 through 1999 newsletters of the UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen, published three times a year. It provides topical information on research findings concerning children and media violence, children's media use, and activities aiming to limit gratuitous media violence. Volume 1 (1997) includes articles dealing with global awareness of children and media violence, television ratings systems, children's emotional responses to television viewing, and children's participation in media activities. Volume 2 (1998) contains articles on the power of culture, the Internet, violence in various media, children's broadcasting in various countries, emotional responses to television viewing, government efforts to deal with media violence, and media education. Volume 3 (1999) includes a special issue on a UNESCO meeting on sexual abuse of children, child pornography, and pedophilia on the Internet. Regular features include information on international meetings, organizations, and new publications. (KB)

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News on Children and Violence on the Screen, 1997-1999

Cecilia von Feilitzen, Editor

Volumes 1-3

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News on Children and Violence on the Screen

Vol 1

No 1-2

1997

A newsletter from

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

at Nordicom
Goteborg University
Sweden

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NEWS ON CHILDREN AND VIOLENCE ON THE SCREEN

PUBLISHED THREE TIMES A YEAR BY

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The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

The Nordic Information Center for Media and Communication Research (Nordicom) has set up an international clearinghouse on children and violence on the screen. The Clearinghouse receives financial support from the Government of Sweden and UNESCO.

The Clearinghouse is to contribute to and effectivize knowledge on children, young people and media violence, seen in the perspective of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The prime task is to make new knowledge and data known to prospective users all over the world.

The International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen informs various groups of users – about

- research findings concerning children, young people and media violence,
- ongoing research on children and media violence,
- children's access to mass media and their media use,
- training and courses of study on children and the media,
- positive alternatives to media violence, and
- measures and activities which aim to limit gratuitous violence on television, in films, and in interactive media.

The object of the Clearinghouse is three-fold: to attract attention to the question of violence on the screen and its role in the lives of children and young people, to stimulate initiatives and activities to combat gratuitous violence, and to help provide a better basis for policy in the field.

The Clearinghouse is user-oriented, which means that our services are offered in response to demand and are adapted to the needs of our clients.

The Clearinghouse publishes a newsletter and a yearbook.

THE CLEARINGHOUSE IS LOCATED AT NORDICOM

NORDICOM is an organ of co-operation between the Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The overriding goal and purpose is to make the media and communication efforts undertaken in the Nordic countries known, both throughout and far beyond our part of the world.

NORDICOM uses a variety of channels – newsletters, journals, books, databases – to reach researchers, students, decision-makers, media practitioners, journalists, teachers and interested members of the general public.

NORDICOM works to establish and strengthen links between the Nordic research community and colleagues in all parts of the world, both by means of unilateral flows and by linking individual researchers, research groups and institutions.

NORDICOM also documents media trends in the Nordic countries. The joint Nordic information addresses users in Europe and further afield. The production of comparative media statistics forms the core of this service.

NORDICOM is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

We welcome researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organisations and interested individuals to the Clearinghouse information network. As a participant you will receive our publications (in English) with the contributions of other network participants from all parts of the globe. (Participation is free of charge.)

The value of the Clearinghouse as a forum rests in the breadth of its coverage and the commitment of its participants. In short: the more relevant information we gather, and the more who contribute from all continents, the better our services.

We are interested in research related to children, young people and media violence, and in documentation of measures, activities and alternatives of relevance to this field (see the six points above).

News briefs and short articles to our newsletter, *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, will be greatly valued, as will notices of coming and recent conferences, seminars and other events; of new publications; and of active associations and organisations with children and media in view.

We are also grateful for receiving relevant publications and materials — if possible, two copies of each, please! They will successively be informed of in the newsletters, and be documented at the Clearinghouse into a growing knowledge base for overviews, compilations and bibliographies of interest to various groups of users.

As for publications and materials in other languages than English, French, German and Spanish, we kindly ask you for complementary translations of the *titles*.

We look forward to hearing from you, not least regarding any requests or suggestions you may have concerning Clearinghouse services. And we hope that you will come to appreciate our efforts — as a means of making your own work known in wider circles, and as a way to keep abreast of others' work.

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The Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen and Nordicom

ULLA CARLSSON
Director Nordicom

A number of documents from UNESCO, UNICEF and international conferences on children and media stress the need to broaden and deepen our understanding of how children relate to and are effected by media violence. Hopes are expressed that greater knowledge of the impact of media violence will lead us beyond stereotyped arguments and simplistic models. Knowledge also inspires other activities to prevent and counteract violence. We need to know more if we are to take effective action against violence. Here it is a matter of keeping the users of research – decision makers, media practitioners and executives, teachers, researchers and interested voluntary and service organizations – well informed. It also means sensitizing media professionals to the rights of children. All this with the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child firmly in mind.

Our societies are based on knowledge. Indeed, knowledge is a vital resource, fully on a par with energy, raw materials and capital. Dynamic research and education on a broad front are required to meet the challenges and problems of an increasingly international society successfully.

FRUITFUL RESEARCH and constructive public discussion are therefore greatly facilitated by the existence of an organization for documentation and information about research findings, research in progress, and activities which aim to limit detrimental violence on television, in films, and in interactive media. There is an acknowledged need for information brokers, who can interpret and satisfy the needs and desires of different groups of users. These are the functions that the term 'clearinghouse' signifies.

After the UNESCO Conference in Lund, Autumn 1995, on the subject of children and media violence, Nordicom was contacted and asked to participate in the establishment of a Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen. We were interested and we received financial support from the Swedish Government and UNESCO to set up and operate the Clearinghouse.

NORDICOM, the Nordic Information Center for Media and Communication Research, founded as an organ of Nordic co-operation over twenty years ago by the Nordic Council of Ministers, works in both national and international arenas. Information about current research activities and research findings in the Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden – is spread among the Nordic research community as well as to policy-makers, media practitioners, journalists, information officers, students, teachers and interested members of the general public trough a variety of channels. Nordicom publishes periodicals, books, catalogues of current research, surveys of literature, statistical compendia, bibliographies, offers on line services from its database, and so forth.

Nordicom works to keep research colleagues and media professionals in other countries abreast of Nordic research in the field and maintains links between Nordic and international research bodies and institutions. Our journal, *the Nordicom Review*, reaches 1. 400 subscribers in more than 120 countries in all parts of the world.

Nordicom also monitors developments in the media sector throughout the Nordic region. This joint Nordic information service will serve users in the Nordic countries as well as in Europe and other parts of the world. The core of this effort is the generation of comparative Nordic media statistics. Nordicom is party to several collaborative projects relating to the media and cultural policy in Europe.

This is the framework in which Nordicom will undertake the responsibilities which an international clearinghouse on children and violence on the screen entails.

A FUNDAMENTAL STARTING POINT for Nordicom's work to build up the Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen will be the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention provides the perspective in which violence should be considered. Research findings on children and media violence to date appear to harbour some contradictions, and the Convention would appear to be an excellent tool for establishing conceptual clarity in this area of study.

The prime focus will rest on what might be called 'problematic' violence, that serves as a model for solving conflicts or establishing the perpetrator's power, control of status, for giving vent to frustrations and anger, and violence as cult.

Crucial to the success of the kind of clearinghouse outlined here is the establishment of fruitful partnerships with relevant researchers and research institutions and the identification of instrumental user-groups. The Clearinghouse should have the character of a 'network center'.

The sum total of Clearinghouse documentation activities will form the basis for the publication of a yearbook and a small newsletter. The yearbook may consist of a thematic section with articles on a given subject, and a section of standard format featuring notices of new literature, statistics, media education, surveys of measures and legislation, and constructive alternatives to violence. The newsletter, now introducing the first issue, will provide information of a topical nature.

The Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen will be user-oriented, which is to say that the

services it offers will meet existing demand and be adopted to the need of its users. Users' interests and needs are the focal point, the primus motor.

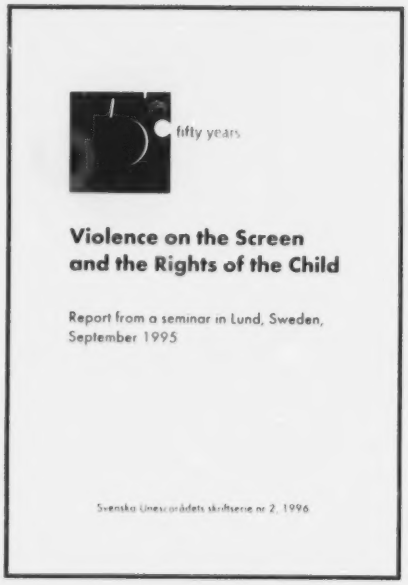
The Clearinghouse informs these various groups of users – researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organizations and interested individuals – about

- research findings concerning children, young people and media violence,
- ongoing research on children and media violence,
- children's access to mass media and their media use,
- training and courses of study on children and the media,
- positive alternatives to media violence, and
- measures and activities which aim to limit gratuitous violence on television, in films, and in interactive media.

By way of conclusion, we might summarize Nordicom's ambitions in this work as follows:

The Clearinghouse is to contribute to and effectivize knowledge on children, young people and media violence, seen in the perspective of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Our prime task is to make new knowledge known to prospective users all over the world. Cumulative knowledge is prerequisite to both fruitful research and constructive policy and practice in an age when the economic and cultural importance of the media already looms large and continues to grow day by day.

It is our hope that the Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen will become the 'hub' of a global network dealing with the question of media violence and its role in the lives of children and young people, stimulating initiatives and activities which aim to limit gratuitous violence, and providing a better basis for policy in the field. Such a forum of ideas could contribute to find the attainable common ground for relevant measures and activities.


fifty years
Violence on the Screen and the Rights of the Child
Report from a seminar in Lund, Sweden, September 1995
Svenska Unescorådets skriftserie nr 2. 1996

To order the English report from the seminar *Violence on the Screen and the Rights of the Child*, held in Lund, Sweden, September 1995, **please contact:**

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The report is free of charge!

Prelude to the Clearinghouse

NILS GUNNAR NILSSON
Representative of Sweden
on the Executive Board of UNESCO

Two phenomena in the late 1980s and early 1990s caught many people's attention: the explosion in number of television channels and, already as a mathematical consequence of formula one in TV entertainment, an explosion of instances showing violence on the screen. Not only affecting adults with a free choice and a more clear idea about the difference between fiction and reality, but also kids, even in very early ages, totally unprepared for the images thrown upon them.

The concern was also felt among some chairpersons of national UNESCO commissions, who asked media representatives of their commissions to look into the phenomena, as professionals.

THAT'S WHY SOME OF US met in Hamburg in the early summer of 1993 with the purpose to plan a brain storming session with media professionals, and perhaps some media researchers, in order to at least start a discussion.

We were invited by our Swiss colleague to the EBU (European Broadcasting Union) headquarters in Geneva, where we met in the Autumn of 1993. As one of our guests we had invited Jo Groebel, professor of mass communication at the University of Utrecht, who had recently published an article in *Die Zeit*, where he with a very catchy parallel summarized his research findings. In the 60s and 70s we dumped poisonous trash into the rivers and in the sea – and thought we had gotten rid of it. But no, it turned up again, but not where we expected it. Perhaps the same can happen with the trash we dump into the minds of our children?

Somebody mentioned already in Geneva, more or less as a question and very much en passant, if not the Convention on the Rights of the Child could be of some relevance in this context. The question wasn't answered, but I kept it in my mind.

We decided to have a follow up-seminar outside Stockholm, inviting programme setters and programme buyers and people dealing with ethic codes, to come and bring with them concrete examples of difficult sequences, where artistic considerations collides with protectionist instincts. Where do you draw the line in a certain programme? And does the official guidelines bring any help?

THE SEMINAR was in a way a brutal experience for many of us. One of the participants, newly appointed head of the news department of one of the Czech TV channels and with a background as a war correspondent, made a comment which remains in my memory: "Nobody who is playing with violence as a way of entertainment should be allowed to do that without having an experience of war. Real war."

Representatives from eight European TV channels attended the seminar, which was organized by Helena Sandblad, veteran of child and youth programming at Swedish Television. Already the initiative to invite to such a seminar, we were told, started discussions in the various TV houses on the amount of violence on the screen and the responsibility by those who are deciding what's on the screen. A third step, an invitation to a big international conference on the subject, was in the air.

That conference took place in the old university town of Lund in southern Sweden in September 1995. We choose very deliberately the theme "Violence on the Screen and the Rights of the Child". Many meetings and seminars on the topic of violence in the media had already taken place, and why another one? A global consensus on what to do about it was anyhow impossible to reach.

WE LOOKED THE OTHER WAY AROUND. There is already an UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, an international law signed by most UN member states. Is this Convention also applicable on the new media environment where today's children live? What does it mean that a child has the right to be protected not only from physical damage but also from mental?

That was what we wanted people from all sectors of the media world to discuss. The conference was organized by the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO in co-operation with UNESCO and UNICEF and brought together 130 participants from more than 20 countries. A report from the conference is available in English, (see page 2).

Rapporteur at the conference was the Swedish minister of culture at that time, Margot Wallström, who in her final remarks underlined the need to create a clearinghouse as a permanent follow up to the conference – and her government's willingness to share the financial burden for such a clearinghouse.

Now this clearinghouse is established at Nordicom, and those of us who are still very much involved in the theme of the conference, Violence on the Screen and the Rights of the Child, and at the same time are familiar with the effectiveness in which Nordicom is run, are deeply satisfied with this connection. The three steps of seminars were just a prelude to the UNESCO International Clearinghouse; now the real story begins!

Our Creative Diversity, *UNESCO, 1995, is a report by the World Commission on Culture and Development, established by the United Nations and UNESCO and led by Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. The document presents a programme of action with the purpose of influencing the international political agenda and actively engaging individuals, groups, organisations and states.*

A number of areas are pointed out in the report. One chapter is devoted to children and young people, another to mass media. Violence on television — and in electronic games, computers, home videos and on the Internet — is discussed in relation to measures that further the rights of the child.

Introduction

CECILIA VON FEILITZEN
Scientific Co-ordinator, The Clearinghouse

The subject of children, young people and media violence has been on the agenda for decades. Today, with more and more visual electronic and digitalized media that are transnational and outside national control – and, as a consequence, more and more violent representations in our cultural environment – there is considerable anxiety about the influences of screen violence among many parties and in many nations. Quite often there is also some resignation about what to do about it, especially on a national level.

At the same time, the media situation varies widely in different parts of the world. Just to mention one example: Whereas children in high income countries are referred to as a multimedia generation, half of the world's children still do not have access to television in their homes, and the lack of books is overwhelming. How can media be a resource for education and democratic participation, if parts of the world live beside the communication revolution? And when there are television sets, the share of imported material on national television is often considered too high.

It is therefore important to raise the topic of children and media to a global plane. It is even more important in relation to the fact that around half of the world's population consists of children and young people.

The Clearinghouse aims at creating better conditions for a global dialogue on the subject of children and violence on the screen, by collating, generating and effectivizing knowledge in the field.

The main part of this introductory issue of the newsletter, where the Clearinghouse is presented, gives examples of other global and regional activities concerning children and media. Some activities have been going on for a long time.

During the 1990's, however, the global activities focusing on children and media have intensified into a notable international movement. This movement, which mostly has the purpose of defending children's interests, can be regarded as a direct answer to the spread of satellite television, Internet, etc., beyond national borders and influence.

Sometimes it is a critical counter-movement, sometimes it is made up of efforts to establish platforms for discussions between media professionals, politicians, children, parents, teachers, and various child advocacy groups. This whole movement points to a growing global awareness of children and their media situation.

The examples in this newsletter show that there are many ways of standing up for children, trying to ameliorate their media conditions and counter-act the resignation concerning what to do about gratuitous media violence and other problems experienced with the media.

The examples bear, among other things, reference to parts of the work of UN, UNESCO and UNICEF, and to regional guidelines on media violence agreed upon by politicians or by the media themselves. Other examples are meetings and declarations to promote children's access to television, as well as better production conditions for, and diversity and quality in, children's programming. Still other examples are conferences and seminars, among researchers, media practitioners or regulators, on children and media generally, on media violence, and on media education to facilitate children's competence. There are also examples of various kinds of international associations and organisations that have children's rights, child and media research, or programmes and films for children in view.

We hope that future issues of the newsletter can present more similar activity – national, too – but also that they can highlight research results and facts that are of importance to and do something for children, and where children's voices are heard.

THE INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY OF BROADCASTING

In December this year, on Sunday 14, during the sixth International Children's Day of Broadcasting (ICDB), more than 2.000 broadcasters in over 170 countries, will dedicate a day to children's issues and children's participation. The Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children have the right to express their views, and to obtain information, regardless of frontiers. ICDB, a joint initiative of UNICEF and the International Council of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, enables broadcasters to take part in making this right a reality, to *tune in to kids*.

The following examples from ICDB 1996, show some of the events that took place around the world:

In Thailand, the Prime Minister talked to young reporters on ITV about children's problems. ITV will follow up on the Day by having children produce their own programme each Saturday;

Mexico's Multivision TV Station truly captured the spirit of ICDB, calling it's day, "Children Take Over the Station";

In Mali, where FM radio has become extremely popular, almost 120 hours were reserved to broadcasting for and by children;

In Namibia and South Africa there was a live TV link between the two countries, in which children spoke to one another on the air;

In Liberia, 65 children worked as broadcasters at three stations. They then took over the radio stations for a week, focusing on the peace process and on relevant issues such as child soldiers and street children.

This and other information can be found on the UNICEF Web site: **http://www.unicef.org/icdb/index.html**

For information, please contact:
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The Media and the Convention of the Rights of the Child

THOMAS HAMMARBERG
Vice-chairman
UN Committee of the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child from 1989, valid for children below the age of eighteen, is now formally endorsed by all countries but three. It contains four basic principles to guide political decision-making affecting the child.

First, it stipulates that such decisions should be taken *with the best interests of the child* as a primary consideration. The *opinions of children themselves* should be heard. Not only their survival but also *their development* should be ensured. Finally, there should be *no discrimination* between children; each child should be able to enjoy his/her rights.

These principles, with their crucial dimensions of both participation and protection, are reflected in the substantive articles of the Convention. Of these, one in particular – article 17 – deals with the child and the media. Many other articles are also highly relevant for the media, for example article 13.

THE UN COMMITTEE on the Rights of the Child met on 7 October 1996 for a general discussion on the issue of "the child and the media". The Committee had invited representatives of United Nations organs, bodies and specialized agencies, other competent bodies, including non-governmental organizations, media representatives, research and academic organizations and children, to contribute to the discussions and provide expert advice.

By way of introduction, the Committee expressed the view that, as with human rights in general, the press and other media have essential functions in promoting and protecting the fundamental rights of the child and in helping to make reality of the principles and standards of the Convention. The Committee also expressed the view that the media could play a pivotal role in monitoring the actual realization of the rights of the child.

Special reference was made to the "image" of the child given by the media, which can either create and convey respect for children and young people or spread prejudices and stereotypes which may have a negative influence on public opinion and politicians. Reference was also made to the protection of the privacy of the child by the media, in reporting about, for instance, involvement in criminal activities, sexual abuse or family problems, and to the protection of children against information that may have negative and harmful impact on them, primarily programmes containing brutal violence and pornography. Finally, reference was made to the role of the media in offering children the possibility to express themselves.

(Continuing overleaf...)

THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

ARTICLE 17

States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health. To this end, States Parties shall:

(a) Encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of article 29;

(b) Encourage international co-operation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources;

(c) Encourage the production and dissemination of children's books;

(d) Encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous;

(e) Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being, bearing in mind the provisions of articles 13 and 18.

ARTICLE 13

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

2. The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:

(a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or

(b) For the protection of national security or of public order *(ordre public)*, or of public health or morals.

THE COMMITTEE IDENTIFIED three main areas to be considered during the debate:

- **Child Participation in the Media**

In short, the discussion here centred around the importance of children participating not just as commentators, but at all levels of the information and media production process. Therefore, adequate mechanisms must be developed to enable the child to participate. Not only the media as such but also parents and professionals working with and for children must help children to make their voices heard.

Among many other things mentioned, the potential positive impact of technology for children's rights was underlined, as well as the importance of their access also to all traditional media.

- **Protection of the Child against Harmful Influences through the Media**

It was said, that States should take concrete measures to encourage the media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child, as called for in article 17(a). The clear identification of harmful influences in media was considered essential, as well as the need to raise, through school and other fora, the awareness of children on how to tackle media issues in a critical and constructive manner.

Also, a better balance ought to be reached in the media between concern for protection and accurate reflection of the real world. A better balance is needed, too, regarding cultural diversity and gender bias. It was recognized that freedom of expression was not incompatible with the strong prohibition of material injurious to the child's well-being. Specific reference was also made to Internet, for example, the idea to develop in all countries hot-lines where Internet users can transmit information on existing harmful sites.

- **Respect for the Integrity of the Child in Media Reporting**

In short, it was stressed that media play an essential role in the promotion and protection of human rights in general, and should be particularly vigilant in trying to safeguard the integrity of the child. For example, media must take into account the best interests of the child when children are sources of information, as in interviews or simulations with child victims of violence and abuse. Reference was also made to the most common stereotypes in media reporting about children, such as the "violent teen-ager" or the misrepresentation of children from specific groups.

ON THE BASIS OF THE DISCUSSIONS on the three areas and in my capacity as rapporteur of the meeting, I formulated the following recommendations:

1. Child Media: A dossier should be compiled on positive and practical experiences of active child participation in media, like 'Children's Express'[1] in the United Kingdom and the United States.

[1] A news agency where child reporters provide information aimed at children.

2. Child Forum within Internet: The UNICEF-initiated 'Voices of Youth' at the World Wide Web should be further promoted and advertised as a positive facility for international discussion on important issues between young people.

3. Active Child Libraries: The experience of dynamic child libraries, or child departments within public libraries, should be documented and disseminated.

4. Media Education: Knowledge about media, their impact and functioning should be taught in schools at all levels. Students should be enabled to relate to and use the media in a participatory manner as well as to learn how to decode media messages, including in the advertising. Good experiences in some countries should be made available to others.

5. State Support to Media for Children: There is a need for budgetary support to ensure the production and dissemination of children's books, magazines and papers; music, theatre and other artistic expressions for children as well as child oriented films and videos. Assistance through international co-operation should also support media and art for children.

6. Constructive Agreements with Media Companies to Protect Children against Harmful Influences: Facts should be gathered about various attempts of voluntary agreements with media companies on positive measures such as not broadcasting violent programmes during certain hours, clear presentations before programmes about their content and the development of technical devices – like 'V-chips' – to help consumers to bloc out certain types of programmes. Likewise, experiences of voluntary ethical standards and mechanisms to encourage respect for them should be assembled and evaluated; this should include an analysis of the effectiveness of existing Codes of Conduct, professional guidelines, Press Councils, Broadcast Councils, Press Ombudsmen and similar bodies.

7. Comprehensive National Plans of Action to Empower Parents in the Media Market: Governments should initiate a national discussion on means to promote positive alternatives to the negative tendencies in the media market, to encourage media knowledge and support parents in their role as guides to their children when relating with electronic and other media. An international workshop should be organized to promote a discussion on this approach.

8. Advice on Implementation of article 17 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: A study should be conducted with the purpose of developing advice to governments on how they could encourage the development of 'guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being'. Such a study should also serve the purpose of assisting the Committee on the Rights of the Child in drafting a General Comment on article 17.

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9. Specific Guidelines for Reporting on Child Abuse: To encourage further discussions in the news rooms and within the media community as a whole guidelines should be drafted by relevant journalist bodies on how to report on abuse of children and at the same time protect the dignity of the children involved. Special emphasis should be placed on the issue of not exposing the identity of the child.

10. Handbook Material for Journalist Education on Child Rights: Material should be produced to assist journalist and media schools on child rights standards, established procedures for child rights monitoring, existing international, regional and national institutions working with children as well as basic aspects of child development. The manual planned by the United Nations Centre for Human Rights as a tool for journalist education on human rights should be widely disseminated when produced.

11. Network for Media Watchgroups: The positive experiences of media watchgroups in various countries should be further encouraged and 'good ideas' transferred between countries. The purpose is to give media consumers a voice in the discussion on media ethics and children. A focal point for exchanges should be established.

12. Service to 'Child Rights Correspondents': Interested journalists should be invited to sign in to a list of 'Child Rights Correspondents'. They should receive regular information about important child issues, interesting reports by others and be seen as media advisers to the international child rights community.

A WORKING GROUP met on April, 14, 1997 to consider constructive ways of ensuring implementation of the twelve recommendations and other proposals made during the discussion. Authorities, organizations and individuals are welcome with further suggestions to Paolo David, Centre for Human Rights, United Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Schweiz.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY ON THE NET

Pedophiles exchange written material, pictures and videos on the net. They plan their weekend meetings in Europe and the U.S., or visit the porn-shops that trade in child pornography on the net itself.

In connection with the first World Congress Against Sexual Exploitation of Children held in Stockholm at the end of August 1996, The Norwegian Ombudsman for Children, and Save the Children Norway, initiated a project with the aim of identifying pedophile networks: systems, methods, codes and ways of communication used by criminals involved in the sexual exploitation of children.

Intensive investigation undertaken by professional computer-hackers revealed organised trading in child pornography on the net, and special sites containing information on sex tours and meetings. In one chat group we found hard core amateur child pornography, showing girls and boys between the age of eight and 12 being raped repeatedly by adults of both sexes.

The mass media, i.e. radio, television, newspapers and magazines, has traditionally been controlled by national laws and barriers. The Internet presents us with new challenges. How do you combat documented child abuse in the form of pictures and text, circulating on the Internet, while retaining the principle of free flow of information? New and international guidelines need to be drawn up and implemented to facilitate a certain conduct on the net.

Everyone using the net can report or give information about web-sites, ftp-servers, chat channels, etc., relating to child pornography or pedophile activity by sending e-mails to **children@risk.sn.no.**

In the struggle against the pedophile community we would appreciate any piece of information regarding child pornography or networks used by child abusers on the net. We will pass on to the Norwegian police, who co-operate with Interpol, substantiated information that can bring us closer to the day when commercial and sexual exploitation of children will come to an end. All correspondents are guaranteed anonymity, if they so desire.

The international community must decide quickly, whether NGOs or UN-bodies should carry the responsibility of cleaning up the net. Once this has been decided the body should take steps to co-ordinate an international response to this international issue, which cannot be tackled by individual groups or nations alone.

The world is growing increasingly aware of the presence of pedophiles, and as proposed at the World Congress in Stockholm, Save the Children and the Ombudsman for Children in Norway have agreed on establishing an International Focal Point located at Save the Children's office in Oslo.

IN SHORT, THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE FOCAL POINT ARE:

- Monitoring child pornography and pedophile activities on the Internet.
- Networking activities: initiate a co-operation between NGOs, academic institutions, police authorities, and other professional partners related to this topic. This network will represent a powerful resource pool as an instrument for action.
- Information gathering through use of the e-mail hot line **children@risk.sn.no** and the Focal Point web site at the *Children's House in Cyberspace* located at, **http://childhouse.uio.no/redd_barna** On this site you can also find a discussion room for the networking partners.
- An international panel or task force to develop a frame work of action based on information and experiences of the Focal Point's activities.
- In co-operation with some of the main software manufacturers, organise a world congress on how to reduce child pornography and pedophile activities on the net. The congress will be staged on the net itself.
- Information service towards the media.

TROND WAAGE, Ombudsman for Children, Norway
JEANETTE AASLI, Save the Children, Norway

European Media Measures under Consideration

ANNA CELSING
Free-lance Journalist, Belgium

Since the early 1990s children in Europe have, in principle, been protected against exposure to gratuitous violence on television by two pieces of European legislation, the European Convention on Transfrontier Television and the EU Television without Frontiers Directive In recent years, however, media development and events such as the pedophile murders in Belgium, revealing the use of the Internet to disseminate child pornography, have increased political pressure to take additional measures to protect minors against abuse and exposure to media content considered harmful to their development.

IN THE EUROPEAN UNION several initiatives are under way. On April 16, 1997 a revision of the television directive came to an end when the European Parliament and the Council finally reached an agreement on a few controversial issues, among these the so-called "V-chip" amendment proposed by Parliament.

If accepted, this amendment would have required broadcasters to encode all their programmes on the basis of a common classification system, and every television sold or leased would have had to be fitted with a mechanism ("violence-chip") enabling parents to filter out programmes they do not want their children to see. But neither the Commission nor the Council supported the amendment, regarding legislation on this issue as premature, particularly as the system has been abandoned in those places in Europe where it has been tested. In the end Parliament settled for a text urging the Commission to carry out an investigation into the possible advantages and drawbacks of measures facilitating parent control. The study shall take into account experience gained in the field in and beyond Europe, as well as the views of interested parties such as producers and media specialists.

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT also proposed that programmes that are likely to impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors should be preceded by an acoustic warning or identified by a visual symbol throughout their duration. This amendment was accepted by the Council already in its common position of June 11, 1996, which also included a new article obliging the Commission to attach particular importance to the application of the rules on the protection of minors and human dignity in its periodic report on the application of the directive. The final text of the revised television directive will be published as soon as it has been formally adopted by the European Parliament and the Council, most likely in June 1997. Member states will then have 18 months for its transfer into national law.

TELEVISION BEING BUT ONE OF THE MEDIA in which children may encounter violent and other potentially harmful materials, there has been a growing concern in the European Union about new outlets for such content and the Council has urged the Commission to propose measures. In October 1996 the Commission presented two documents on this matter: a Green Paper on the Protection of Minors and Human Dignity in Audiovisual and Information Services (COM(96)483) and a so-called 'communication' on Illegal and harmful content on the Internet (COM(96)487).

In these documents the Commission emphasizes the need to distinguish between illegal material, such as child pornography, and other types of content, such as ordinary pornography or material containing violence, which is legal but may be harmful to children.

ILLEGAL MATERIAL falls under existing laws and can be punished accordingly. Given the international character of the new media and the fact that criminal law only operates within national borders, the Commission recommends that the EU Member States define certain minimum common standards in their legislation in order to avoid loopholes. In addition, increased co-operation in the field of justice and home affairs is essential, writes the Commission, also noting the need to discuss these problems in international fora such as the OECD, the World Trade Organisation and the United Nations.

The Commission stresses that issues of liability of Internet access providers and host service providers need to be examined and self-regulation encouraged. More authoritarian methods, such as blocking all direct access to the Internet combined with blacklisting of documents, are "inconceivable for Europe as it would severely interfere with the freedom of the individual and its political traditions", writes the Commission.

With regard to content that is legal but may be harmful to children, the Commission points out that the rules in the EU Member States vary greatly and reflect differ-

THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON TRANSFRONTIER TELEVISION

ARTICLE 7

Responsibilities of the broadcaster

1. All items of programme services, as concerns their presentation and content, shall respect the dignity of the human being and the fundamental rights of others.

In particular, they shall not:

a. be indecent and in particular contain pornography;

b. give undue prominence to violence or be likely to incite to racial hatred.

2. All items of programme services which are likely to impair the physical, mental or moral development of children and adolescents shall not be scheduled when, because of the time of transmission and reception, they are likely to watch them.

3. The broadcaster shall ensure that news fairly presents facts and events and encourage the free formation of opinions.

ences in cultural and moral standards. Europe, however, has a basis for a common approach in article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights which guarantees the right to freedom of expression. This right can be subject to certain limitations for specified reasons, including the protection of health or morals and the prevention of crime, but only if the measure meets a real social need and is not disproportionate in the restrictions it imposes. For this purpose the European Court of Human Rights has developed a test of proportionality, which the Commission recommends. The Commission also emphasises the importance of media education and writes that it intends to support national awareness actions for parents and teachers.

THESE PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED in several fora, including a meeting of European tele-communications ministers in November 1996 where most of the actions proposed were supported. At a consultative meeting with representatives of national administrations in February 1997, it was stressed that self-regulation should be a fundamental element given time to prove itself before considering other types of intervention, particularly of a regulatory nature.

Similar reactions were voiced when a European Parliament report on the Commission proposals was presented in April this year. Regulatory measures should be avoided in order not to infringe upon the freedom of expression and the protection of privacy. As for illegal material on the Internet, Europol should be given powers to monitor the Internet and take measures to remove, for instance, pedophile material. Control of access to potentially harmful but legal content should mainly be up to the individual, particularly parents, according to the European Parliament Commission on Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs.

THE PROTECTION OF MINORS with regard to media content has also been discussed in the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities (ECOSOC). In February 1996 the Committee issued a so-called 'opinion' calling for a European cultural policy for children (CES 250/96) in which it writes that it "is appalled by the increasing violence and bad language on TV affecting children's perception and development". It recommended that the rules in the EU television directive be integrated with a "preventive and more positive approach", including encouragement of television companies to show quality programmes and creating state institutions in each Member State charged with evaluating and rewarding excellence in children's television. The ECOSOC also urges socio-professional organizations to take measures against TV companies which broadcast violence oriented TV programmes for children and young people.

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE, too, is considering new measures. At a ministerial conference in Prague in December 1994, the ministers responsible for media policy requested the Committee of Ministers to prepare possible guidelines on the portrayal of violence in the media. As a result a Council recommendation – a politically, but not legally binding measure – on the portrayal of violence in the electronic media has been drafted.

The draft recommendation emphasises the commitment to the fundamental right to freedom of expression as guaranteed by the European Convention on human rights. Therefore the primary responsibility with respect to the gratuitous portrayal of violence lies with those responsible for the content of the media. The states only bear subsidiary responsibility, it is underlined. It is recommended that the media establish codes of conduct and internal guidelines with regard to such material. But parents and teachers must also assume responsibility, for example by stimulating children and adolescents to develop a critical attitude to such programmes.

As for state measures, the draft recommendation mentions promoting the establishment of independent regulatory authorities, the possibility of including certain obligations concerning the portrayal of violence among the licensing conditions for broadcasters, and the promotion of research on such programming and the effects they may have. In addition, the state should share responsibility for media education with those responsible for the content and other sectors of society. Presently the Council of Europe itself is examining the possibility of launching an action plan on electronic media education.

The recommendation on the portrayal of violence may be adopted at a meeting in June. At the moment, however, one country – Sweden – is not willing to accept the recommendation, being opposed to the idea of regulating media content and having stringent domestic laws on the freedom of speech.

The need for young people to adopt a critical approach to the media, in particular to the cinema, was also discussed at a Council of Europe meeting in October 1996. Continent-wide distribution of important films would enable young people to learn to select quality works, said ministers of culture from the 39 European member states taking part in the meeting. In addition, school curricula and teacher training should include courses on the cinema, ministers urged.

THE EU TELEVISION WITHOUT FRONTIERS' DIRECTIVE

ARTICLE 22

Member States shall take appropriate measures to ensure that television broadcasts by broadcasters under their jurisdiction do not include programmes which might seriously impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors, in particular those that involve pornography or gratuitous violence. This provision shall extend to other programmes which are likely to impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors, except where it is ensured, by selecting the time of the broadcast or by any technical measure, that minors in the area of transmission will not normally hear or see such broadcasts. Member States shall also ensure that broadcasts do not contain any incitement to hatred on grounds of race, sex, religion or nationality.

Also, the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) have guidelines for programmes dealing with the portrayal of violence. The full text of these guidelines is reproduced on pages 10 -11.

THE EUROPEAN BROADCASTING UNION'S GUIDELINES

FOR PROGRAMMES WHEN DEALING WITH THE PORTRAYAL OF VIOLENCE

1. WATERSHED

Programme-makers and schedulers should always take into account the transmission time of their programme when considering matters of content.

Scenes of violence may well make a programme inappropriate for an early placing because of its unsuitability for viewing by children.

In order to avoid any confusion in this matter by the viewing public in general, and parents in particular, there should be a clearly understood watershed at an appropriate time during evening viewing, before which all programmes should be suitable for audiences consisting of a high proportion of children. Parents must accept that responsibility for what their children watch after the watershed lies in large measure with them.

2. NEWS AND FACTUAL PROGRAMMES

News and information broadcasts have of necessity to deal on a daily basis with social conflicts in which violence can be a part. The audience should not, and cannot, be protected from this everyday occurrence. Actual violence is acceptable in news programmes as broadcasters have a duty to show factual violence in the world, but the negativity of such acts should be stressed.

News should and will shock viewers at times. With some news stories a sense of shock is part of a full human understanding of what has happened, but care should be taken never to discomfort viewers gratuitously by over-indulgence. The more often viewers are shocked, the more it will take to shock them.

One person's shock is another person's news or art. Thus, a decision in this field means striking a balance between the current social consensus on what is acceptable and the broadcaster's duty to reflect reality as he or she sees it.

In particular, the human dignity of the victim as well as those also affected must not be offended and their personal rights must be respected. Violence in factual programmes should not be so prominent or commonplace as to become sanitized. The public cannot be shielded from the violence which happens daily in the world, but it must be portrayed in the most sensitive way possible.

The degree of violence in news programmes must be essential to the integrity of the programme; care should be taken in the choice of material depending on the time of day at which bulletins are broadcast.

3. FICTIONAL AND ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMMES

Television drama must be able to reflect important issues truthfully, and violence is part of both nature and society. Drama on television involves the collaboration of many different skills and creative talents. In any collaboration there must be editorial judgement.

Since conflict and its associated violence are somewhat ingrained human traits, they are often made the central component in fictional and entertainment programmes. What is crucial is that the reasons for the existence of violence in the treatment should be portrayed in a plausible manner and violence should not be used in a purely unprovoked manner to entertain and as a way of maximizing the audience.

Gratuitous violence must be proscribed. The more intense the violence, the greater should be the distancing from reality. The aim should be how little violence is necessary without undue dramatic compromise.

The effects of portraying violence are heavily dependent on the form this presentation takes and the dramatic context. Particular care must therefore be taken with realistic presentations with which the viewer may more easily identify. Details of violence and aggressive behaviour which invite imitation should be avoided.

Portrayals which trivialize, or indeed glorify, the use of violence, whether physical or psychological, and which present violence as a means of overcoming conflicts, should also be avoided at all costs. It is important that in addition to the causes of violence their destructive consequences should also be shown, and that the use of violence as a way of solving problems should be portrayed critically. Not all violence is physical. Non-physical violence can also be upsetting and shocking, especially to children. This is an important area where particular care should be taken, as is the portrayal of sadistic violence.

Scheduling of fictional and entertainment programmes containing violent scenes is important and adequate warning must be given.

4. PROGRAMME ACQUISITIONS

Acquired programmes should conform to normal editorial policy.

Violence in distant settings can be relatively less shocking, disturbing or liable to dangerous imitation.

Broadcasters, however, are committed to the vigilant exercise of control; acquisitions should be abandoned if they are incapable of being adapted or edited to conform to guidelines.

Broadcasters will need to ensure the right to edit overtly violent acquisitions before transmission.

Accurate description in promotional material is essential.

5. PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children and young people can be particularly sensitive to violence and brutality. Generally speaking, those rules valid for the totality of the public should be applied in a much stricter manner at times when the audience is more particularly made up of children and adolescents.

Programmes aimed at children should treat the portrayal of violence, both physical and non-physical, with particular caution. Special care should be exercised and careful scheduling is necessary.

In programme choices, programmes should be preferred which propound a positive attitude to life, human values, and non-violence.

Young children do not fully understand the subtleties of good and bad and will readily commit themselves to one side in a conflict. Violence as an easy way of resolving conflict should be avoided. Care should be taken with domestic violence, both physical and verbal. The danger of imitation should always be borne in mind.

When portraying conflicts and violence it should be taken into account that young children are less able to perceive television programmes in their entirety than adults, that they align themselves much more powerfully to individual, visual surface appeal and only gradually become able to differentiate between central and peripheral aspects. Children identify with characters on an emotional level more readily than adults and the corresponding reactions such as fear are stronger and last longer.

The same rules apply to fantasy as to realistic dramas. Care should be taken not to cause anxiety and undesirable tension nor to incite aggressive behaviour.

In news reports, attention should be given to the likely impact, particularly on children viewing alone, of coverage of violence and its consequences.

Programme-makers should clearly understand that moral attitudes and values only emerge gradually throughout childhood, so children and young people are easier to influence than adults.

Programmes should take care therefore not to undermine the moral development of minors.

6. PROGRAMME TRAILS AND SIGNPOSTING

Programmes containing scenes of violence may be required to be preceded by a detailed warning announcement, but overuse of warnings can render them ineffective. They should not be used as disclaimers against the programmes that follow.

Prudence must be exercised in respect of promotional material and the transmission time of a trail must always be borne in mind.

Trails should honestly reflect the type of programmes being trailed.

Violence as a means of promotion of programmes should not be permitted. Taking violent scenes arbitrarily out of context may shock viewers unfairly.

It may be legitimate to let viewers know if the film or programme being trailed does contain violent scenes, but there is a fine line between effective description and exploitative come-on.

7. ADVERTISING

Advertising should not use violence as a means to sell a product nor as an incitement to violent behaviour. Since children up to a certain age are far less able than adults to recognize the intentions of advertising, and to judge it critically, they are therefore open to influence to a greater extent. Advertising should not exploit the weaknesses of young consumers by using either fear or violence.

OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS FROM THE UNION ON THE WEB

The European Convention on Transfrontier Television.
http: //neon.coe.fr/eng/legaltxt/132e.htm

The EU Television without Frontiers' Directive.
http://europa.eu.int/en/comm/dg10/avpolicy/twf/160497en.html

The Green Paper on the Protection of Minors and Human Dignity in Audiovisual and Information Services
(COM(96) 483).
http://europa.eu.int/en/record/green/ gp9610/protec.htm

Communication on Illegal and Harmful Content on the Internet
(COM(96) 487).
http://europa.eu.int/en/record/legal/index.htm

The Sense of the Bratislava Resolution

The Bratislava Resolution outlines the minimum requirements for a worthy film and television production for children. It addresses the nature of programme content, describing what good quality production can and must be. It also insists on the support which is necessary if workers are to have the freedom and the resources to produce and distribute this material.

THREE DAYS OF INFORMAL TALKS in Slovakia among children's media professionals gave birth to the Bratislava Resolution in 1994. The International Centre of Films for Children and Young People (Centre International du Film pour l'Enfance et la Jeunesse; CIFEJ) had invited heads of children's programming from Eastern European television stations to meet and find ways of dealing with the down-turn of national production for kids, following the formation of the new democracies.

The buzz of the market economy was in the air, but it had only brought an onslaught of importation to the East. National budgets were disappearing both for film and television production. This was leading to widespread unemployment among animators, decorators, writers and directors who, previously, had made some of the richest and most interesting films and programmes for children in the world.

Through all the discussions, participants – no matter where they came from – agreed on many issues:

- Small children need to hear stories told in their own languages, reflecting people they know in places that look like home. This builds a sense of identity and comfort.
- Children should be protected from images of certain kinds of violence and abuse which too often crop up in production which aim to entertain through shock and action.
- Children should not be treated as consumers, a captive audience to whom to sell things.

PRODUCTION FOR CHILDREN motivated by their best interests and general well-being will not be produced by the market economy. This has long been axiomatic in western democracies where public broadcasting takes over the task of making stimulating, entertaining and appropriate shows for kids. In these same countries, film funds either provide money for feature films or non-exploitative features are seldom made. The problem was how to structure a society so that the welfare of the kids became a priority. This question was especially important for the countries of Eastern Europe as transitions brought restructuring to the public agencies like television stations and state-run film funds.

THE SENSE OF THE BRATISLAVA RESOLUTION is that children are the responsibility of each nation, that the market economy would not create balanced programming for kids to grow up on. Adequate funds had to be made available to producers and creators to work in production for children. Yet these funds would only follow from a political will to care for the media needs of the children.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child, which all nations but Somalia, The Cook Islands and the United States have ratified, makes these rights manifest.

IN THE BRATISLAVA DISCUSSIONS, it became clear that the children would need to have spokespeople to remind governments of their obligations. The people who could speak out might belong to writers' unions, to producers' associations, to film institutes or be television programmers. But those who wished to work for children needed to be bolstered by a structure through which to open and sustain the dialogue with politicians and governments. The Resolution was an attempt to define and motivate this structure.

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Executive Director
CIFEJ
International Centre of Films
for Children and Young People

(For address: See page 23)

MANY THANKS TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS!

News briefs and short articles to *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, are greatly valued, as are notices of coming and recent conferences, seminars and other events; of new publications; and of active associations and organisations with children and media in view.

DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE AUTUMN ISSUE IS SEPTEMBER 15, 1997.

BRATISLAVA RESOLUTION

Soon, Mankind will enter the Third Millennium. The cinema will celebrate its 100th anniversary. Television is a little bit younger.

As we reach the crossroads of the year 2000, the importance of children's film continues to grow, as does the need for children to see these films. We can know that.

We live and will live, people from North and South, East and West, in a changing and dynamic world. Mankind will reach new heights in knowledge and in achievement. Children, who are our hope for the future, have the right to benefit from these general developments.

As specialists in children's cinema and television, we appreciate that the increasing impact of film, television and other media on our children demands more specific care and action with an aim to achieving better quality in the lives of the young people.

Good quality films and television programmes for children can and must carry positive fundamental human values. These will help and support the development of a personal conscience in young people, and add new dimensions to their basic social behaviour and to their knowledge of the world.

Good quality children's films and television programmes can and must encourage the process of creative thinking, of deciding and of acting in full liberty in order that children can build their own personalities and their future.

Good quality children's films and television programmes can and must reveal and stress the basic values of each people and of each nation, according to their traditions, the social and cultural backgrounds upon which they are founded, and the national identity of each country. At the same time, these nations must share these values with others in a general harvest of human spirituality.

Good quality children's films can also travel across borders, playing a leading role in the building of the world of tomorrow, helping to define the place in which our children will live.

For all these reasons, we think that the governments, the parliaments, the national and international agencies and organizations around the world must recognize, through support of production and distribution of children's films, a duty to the future of each nation and of the entire world.

There are several ways to achieve such goals:

- stimulating increased production of children's films and television, on a national level, by raising and investing more funds
- building a support system for wider and better distribution of those children's films whose artistic and educational values are more important than their commercial aspects
- encouraging the use on a large scale of production for children in schools and in other educational institutions and activities
- supporting the spread of quality children's screenings in all social areas
- financing and developing the education and training of specialists – scriptwriters, directors and others – of children's production
- stimulating and financing scientific research about the reaction of children to the media, and about the way they use media for their specific needs
- helping national and international professional organizations and associations dealing with the issues surrounding children's film and television to achieve and develop their activities.

We are sure that the governments, the parliaments, the national and international agencies and organizations are aware that supporting children's film and television production will serve the interests of each people, of each country, and will contribute to the building of a better world, one in which we would like to live in at the threshold of the Third Millennium. Never forget that any little thing done for children now is an investment in the future.

The above resolution was adopted by the assembly, on the occasion of a gathering of producers, broadcasters and others interested in production for children, and in sharing experiences, East and West. Over 70 participants came from 30 countries. The meeting was called by CIFEJ, hosted by the Biennale of Animation, and held in Bratislava from 23-25 November 1994.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The First World Summit on Television and Children

The first World Summit on Television and Children was held in Melbourne, Australia, in March 1995. 637 delegates, from 71 countries, attended this landmark event which was hosted by the Australian Children's Television Foundation (the ACTF).

THE IDEA FOR THE WORLD SUMMIT grew out of a Round Table meeting hosted by PRIX JEUNESSE in May 1993. At that meeting it became clear that programming for children was changing and under threat in a variety of ways and could no longer remain purely a domestic issue for most nations if it was to survive with the values and objectives that professionals in the industry believe should apply to children's programs.

In Australia people had fought for and persuaded successive governments that it was important to preserve Australian programs for Australian children through regulation and subsidy in various forms. So the ACTF therefore took on the challenge to host the first World Summit.

THE OBJECTIVES of the first World Summit were:

- to achieve a greater understanding of developments in children's television around the world;
- to raise the status of children's programming;
- to draw the attention of key players in broadcasting the importance of issues relating to children;
- to agree on a charter of guiding principles in children's television;
- to ensure the provision of programs for children will be guaranteed as the communications revolution proceeds;
- to assist the developing world to provide opportunities for children's programming in the future.

THE DISCUSSIONS at the first World Summit have spawned a range of initiatives of ongoing importance:

Several other regional and global summits on Children and the Media have been or shall be held (see page 15, 30, 31).

The International Research Forum was established (see page 21). The Forum met in Paris in April 1997 (see page 17).

Significant progress towards agreement on the Children's Charter was made and the Charter now has worldwide acceptance.

A number of bursaries for producers in developing countries were offered by Channel 4 in the United Kingdom, the ACTF and Fox Children's Network in the USA.

This indicates that a global movement of like-minded professionals will continue to discuss the issues, seek answers and develop solutions in to the next century. Children's television is now on the international agenda in a big way.

PATRICIA EDGAR
Director
Australian Children's Television Foundation

(For address, see page 24)

THE CHILDREN'S TELEVISION CHARTER

1. Children should have programmes of high quality which are made specifically for them, and which do not exploit them. These programmes, in addition to entertaining, should allow children to develop physically, mentally and socially to their fullest potential.

2. Children should hear, see and express themselves, their culture, their language and their life experiences, through television programmes which affirm their sense of self, community and place.

3. Children's programmes should promote an awareness and appreciation of other cultures in parallel with the child's own cultural background.

4. Children's programmes should be wide-ranging in genre and content, but should not include gratuitous scenes of violence and sex.

5. Children's programmes should be aired in regular slots at times when children are available to view, and/or distributed via other widely accessible media or technologies.

6. Sufficient funds must be made available to make these programmes to the highest possible standards.

7. Governments, production, distribution and funding organisations should recognize both the importance and vulnerability of indigenous children's television, and take steps to support and protect it.

May 29, 1995

The Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media

There are concerns that the immense influences of mass media have not been sufficiently harnessed to impart the positive values of Asian culture to children or to contribute to their development. There are also questions of whether media ethics are needed to protect children from harmful information. The Convention on the Rights of the Child addresses these issues and seeks the active involvement of the media as a major partner in promoting children's rights to survival, development, protection and participation.

THE ASIAN SUMMIT on Child Rights and the Media was held from 2 to 5 July 1996 in Manila, the Philippines. The major organising members include the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC), the Philippine Children's Television Foundation, Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union, the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC), Philippines and the United Nations Children's Fund.

The Summit was hosted by the Government of the Philippines and the Council for the Welfare of Children. It was sponsored by Hoso-Bunka Foundation, Friedrich Ebert Philippines, Canadian High Commission and other various organisations.

THE GOALS OF THE SUMMIT WERE:

- To strengthen national commitment to the need for an information society in Asia supportive of the rights of children as articulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- To familiarise decision makers and practitioners in media with the needs and interests of children.
- To mobilise and encourage the media and communication industries to develop quality national and locally-produced programmes and products for children.
- To improve co-ordination and strengthen networks for exchange of information, ideas and programme materials between sectors involved in communication programmes, government and interest groups.
- To seek endorsement of the Children's Television Charter by national and regional policy makers and broadcasters.

Issues examined at the Summit were: child rights and the media; influence of media; access to media; promoting cultural diversity; children's media; media and values: issues of portrayal; media education.

Delegates to the Summit – including ministers and senior officials of Asian governments, journalists, media executives, educators and child rights advocates from 16 countries – adopted the Asian Declaration on Child Rights and the Media.

THE DECLARATION *seeks to re-affirm their commitment* to ensure implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as ratified in their countries; acknowledge the development role, responsibility and power of all forms of media to inform, entertain, educate and influence; and to recognise their potential for children and for social change. The declaration resolves to take necessary action that the interest of children will be protected and promoted. (The full text of the declaration is reproduced on the next page).

A copy of the report of the Asian Summit can be obtained at a charge.

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The Southern African Developing Countries' Summit on Children and Broadcasting

This Summit was held on 31 May 1996 in Johannesburg. The idea for a regional (SADC plus Kenya) forum grew from discussions about how to make the Children's Television Charter emanating from the First World Summit in 1995 in Melbourne more relevant and applicable to Africa, and how to prepare for future representation at broader gatherings such as the Second World Summit in 1998 in London.

A report on the SADC Summit is available, **and further information can be sought from,**

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(Source: Newsletter No. 3, December 1996, from International Research Forum (IRF) on Television and Children, Australian Broadcasting Authority)

ASIAN DECLARATION ON CHILD RIGHTS AND THE MEDIA (MANILA)

We, Ministers of Information, Education, Welfare and Social Development from 27 countries of Asia, Senior Officials representing the various governments, executives, researchers, practitioners and professionals from various streams of media, non-government organisations, advocacy groups and concerned individuals gathered in Manila for the Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media:

re-affirming our commitment to ensure implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as ratified in our countries;

acknowledging the developmental role, responsibility and power of all forms of media to inform, entertain, educate and influence; and,

recognising their potential for children and for social change.

NOW, THEREFORE, RESOLVE THAT ALL MEDIA FOR OR ABOUT CHILDREN SHOULD:

protect and respect the diverse cultural heritage of Asian societies;

be accessible to **all** children;

provide for the girl child and counter the widespread discrimination against the girl child; and,

provide for children with special needs; children in especially difficult circumstances, children of indigenous communities and children in situations of armed conflict.

RESOLVE ALSO, THAT ALL MEDIA ABOUT CHILDREN SHOULD:

adopt policies that are consistent with the principles of non-discrimination and the best interests of all children;

raise awareness and mobilise all sectors of society to ensure the survival, development, protection and participation of all children;

address all forms of economic, commercial and sexual exploitation and abuse of children in the region and ensure that such efforts do not violate their rights, particularly their right to privacy;

protect children from material which glorifies violence, sex, horror and conflict; and,

promote positive values and not perpetuate discrimination and stereotypes.

RESOLVE FURTHER, THAT ALL MEDIA FOR CHILDREN SHOULD:

be of high quality, made especially for them, and do not exploit them;

support their physical, mental, social, moral and spiritual development;

enable children to hear, see and express themselves, their culture, their languages and their life experiences through media which affirm their sense of self and community, while promoting an awareness and appreciation of other cultures;

be wide-ranging in genre and content, but not include gratuitous scenes of violence and sex; and,

be accessible to them at times when they need and can use it.

RESOLVE FINALLY, THAT GOVERNMENTS, MEDIA, NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS, THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND OTHER LOCAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES SHOULD:

provide media education for children and families to develop their critical understanding of all media forms;

provide opportunities for children in creating media and to express themselves on a wide range of issues relating to their needs and interests;

provide sufficient funds and resources to ensure access to and enable the production and dissemination of high quality materials for and about children as well as capacity building for media practitioners so that they could perform their role as developmental agencies;

promote regional and international co-operation through the sharing of research, expertise and exchange of materials and programmes, networking among governments, non-government organisations, media organisations, educational institutions, advocacy groups and other agencies;

provide incentives for excellence through awards at regional and national levels;

provide co-ordinated monitoring mechanisms and encourage self-regulation at regional and national levels to ensure the implementation of this Declaration; and,

convene as early as possible broad national multi-sectoral consultations to develop action plans, including professional guidelines consistent with this Declaration.

ADOPTED, 5 July 1996
Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media, Manila

First International Forum for Child and Media Researchers held in Paris

A MEETING OF RESEARCHERS AMONG THE PARTICIPANTS at the First World Summit on Television and Children in Melbourne in 1995, resulting in the IRF (see page 21), brought to light the need for researchers from all over the world to exchange experiences and evaluate the state of their work in terms of theories, methods and results. Therefore, a small network in France, GRREM (Group de Recherche sur la Relation Enfants/Médias; Research Group on the Relationship between Children and the Media), organised an international forum for researchers, *Youth and Media – Tomorrow*, April 21-25, 1997, in Paris.

Elisabeth Auclaire, chair of GRREM, was responsible for this Paris Forum in co-operation with an international scientific committee. UNESCO undertook patronage of the Forum, which was supported by France Télévision and others under a sponsoring committee presided over by France's Supervisory Broadcasting Council (Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel; CSA). The Forum was open also to media professionals, protagonists from the educational field, and policy makers.

THE RESEARCH PRESENTED at this unique event – the first large international meeting ever for researchers active within the field of children and media – was composed according to proposals submitted in advance by the participants, as well as to the Forum objectives, and an endeavour to achieve a balanced representation of different parts of the world.

For the alternately 350 participants from nearly 40 countries mornings were devoted to plenary sessions, and afternoons to parallel workshops, on daily themes as 'Beyond media effects?, 'Media and social concerns', 'The why and how of future research', and, not least, 'Media education, media literacy'. There were also posters presenting research projects and related activities in short, as well as round tables with discussions between media professionals, policy makers and researchers.

All in all, projects and topics dealt with a wide range of children's and young people's relations to traditional and new media and displayed in an interesting way how research, as a tool of elucidating life and contributing to practices and policies, varies in different cultures and social contexts.

THE FOLLOWING WORDS by Elisabeth Auclaire from the last of four special chronicles leading up to the Forum, give a sense of its aim and direction:

– It is important to remind ourselves of the text of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by all the countries represented at this Forum. It should act as a guide to our thinking, since in its preamble it states that children are people and affirms the need to hear them, listen to them and respond to them.

– Rather than remain content with talking in terms of protection and legislation, would it not be more worthwhile – in the light of information provided by researchers – to seek to discover what positive role the media might play in children's educational development? Could the media not contribute to giving them landmarks and opening doors?

– Above all, there will be (at the Forum) the question of getting to know better what children and young people are making of the media that surround them, and of discovering how we as adults can help them find their way through the proliferation of information sources to which they have access.

A REPORT CONSISTING of papers and posters presented at the Forum will be available on computer disc.

The intensive week clearly demonstrated the need of further similar research meetings, and immediately after the Forum the international scientific committee started a discussion on how to realise the next one.

CECILIA VON FEILITZEN
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Violence in the Media – Prospects for Change

OVER 3.000 SCHOLARLY STUDIES performed on the relationship between violence on television and in other media and the development of aggression in viewers, served as the background and central theme of the international conference "Violence in the Media. Prospects for Change" held on October 3-4 1994 in New York and sponsored by St. John's University. So did also the increasing violence in U.S. society, above all among youth and in schools.

An eloquent illustration of this was the electric sign advertisement on Times Square showing the number of fire-arms (about 220 million) in the USA and the amount of murders and manslaughter committed with these weapons, as well as detailed information about the last committed murder.

CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS were mainly Americans, but represented also, for example, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Israel, South Africa, Sweden and the United Kingdom. They were researchers from a variety of disciplines, government officials, media professionals, and representatives of organisations and interest groups who were working to generate public opinion on violent media representations.

Three members of Congress from New York, and a British member of Parliament, opened the conference by urging everybody to combat violent representations, but with various accentuation on which role legislation or other regulation should have. The most sharp contribution was made by George Gerbner, retired media professor and Dean at the University of Pennsylvania: a fiery appeal against letting constitutional objections prevent efforts. He maintained that *the export* of U.S. violent films to a great degree has stimulated an increase in violent media output.

THE MAIN PART of the conference was devoted to a broad range of research. Topics were, for example, fictional and realistic violence on television, and in film, music videos, video games, and virtual reality; influences of media violence on children, young people, women, and other groups in the form of fright and anxiety, aggression, and desensitisation toward violence; as well as influence on moral development; fantasy; self-image, sexual violence, political violence and peace. The attraction of media violence was also dealt with, as were the roles of viewers' identification, parents, school, and community.

SYSTEMS OF REGULATION and self-regulation in several countries were presented. Strong lobby organisations argued, on basis of research results and other experience, for regulation and other measures that could limit the flow of media violence. Representatives of academic jurisprudence claimed that the U.S. Constitution (First Amendment) did not constitute any obstacle to intervention against harmful media violence. However, the American Civil Liberties Union and other lobby organisations, including certain U.S. media representatives, maintained that so was the case.

Consequently, the prospect for self-regulation within the industry appeared vague, and with that the prospects of diminished influence on program markets in other countries – violent films are a profitable U.S. export product.

CECILIA VON FEILITZEN
Scientific Co-ordinator
based on a report by

JENS CAVALLIN,
Principal Secretary
Ministry of Culture, SWEDEN

Non-violence, Tolerance and Television

COINCIDING WITH THE 125TH anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the prophet on non-violence and tolerance, an international roundtable on *Non-violence, Tolerance and Television*, was organised in New Dehli, April 1, 1994, by UNESCO, the International Programme for Development of Communication (IPDC) and the Indian Government. Many member states of UNESCO had earlier raised the issue of violence in television programmes, with several delegates insisting that UNESCO must not keep silent about this problem. While the issue of violence in the media has been discussed since the advent of them, it takes on added meaning with the ready availability of new communication technologies, accelerating the effects of violence on modern as well as traditional societies.

The roundtable was restricted to a number of broadcasting professionals in order to analyse the problems and put forward solutions in a practical way. Individual viewpoints expressed in the roundtable take primacy but are also summarised in concise form in the report: *Non-violence, Tolerance and Television*. Report of the Chairman to the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication, UNESCO, 1994. The report also includes a paper on TV violence in Asia.

Polish-Swedish Seminar 1996
Media Violence on Polish Agenda 1997

IN EARLY 1996 A FILM FESTIVAL AND SEMINAR on the theme, "Sex and Violence in the Media – Films for Young People?" was held in Warsaw. The effect of the seminar (or lack thereof) suggests that the time was not yet ripe. Today, however, the tide of debate runs high.

Why the difference? In the year between then and now the Poles have had to face news of a series of acts of brutal violence committed by young people. Children in their early teens have murdered other teenagers or passers-by. The murders – fatal beatings – occurred in a number of widely scattered Polish cities. No motives were apparent. These events have shocked Polish society, and young people in several cities have filled the streets in forceful demonstrations against the violence committed by their own age-group.

RECENTLY, FILM DIRECTOR Andrzej Wajda entered into the debate. His vehement demand for setting limits to the media violence gave rise to a debate – pro and con Wajda himself. Once famed for his liberalism, Wajda's

words aroused chilling memories of the days when state censors sought to control all manner of public expression.

Roughly eight years have passed since the fall of dictatorship in Poland, a country of some 40 million people. The following explosion of entertainment produced by transnational media interests filled a long-suffered void. In the space of a few years, American film accounted for 90-100 per cent of the films screened in Warsaw cinemas. This wave of films brought previously censored violence, which also entered into Polish homes via TV and filled booksellers' shelves and tobacconists' racks.

THE POWERFUL CATHOLIC CHURCH concentrated its attention on the increasing variety of media portrayals characterized by sexual open-mindness and frankness. It was at this juncture that I, in the capacity of Cultural Attaché at the Swedish Embassy, decided to raise the issue of sex and violence in the media. Thanks to the enthusiastic collaboration of Suzanne Båge, cinematographic expert at the Swedish Institute, and the staff of the Swedish Film Institute, a programme featuring a series of ten youth films and a seminar was put together. The films illustrated a variety of ways of dealing with sex and violence in the media, taking their point of departure in Swedish policy, which is, rather, restrictive in the case of violence, but quite open about sex.

Some of Poland's leading cultural and scientific figures were engaged to take part in the seminar, which also attracted Polish television coverage. But suddenly, the arrangers ran into a major obstacle. The Church wanted no part of a debate on sex and violence in the media, and devout Poles were admonished not to attend the films or attend/take part in the seminar. Under such circumstances, no school wanted/dared to get involved in the screenings.

AT THE SEMINAR the Polish and Swedish experts seemed to talk past one another. A Swedish research specialist on children, youth and media violence, summarized what research has to say on the subject. Two other Swedish participants described their work with film as a tool to help teenagers solve emotional and other problems. A representative of the Swedish Film Institute lectured to film clips on how portrayals of children in films for juvenile audiences have changed since the 1940s.

The Polish participants, who were mainly psychologists and not media researchers, expressed their conviction that the significance of media violence is little or non-existent. According to them, parental attitude is the most decisive factor with regard to how children and youth develop, and it must be the responsibility of parents, not the media, to bring up the children.

IN LATE SUMMER OF 1995, Execution, a macabre film which shows more than thirty authentic executions, topped the charts among rental videos in Poland. The same time the following year, the first of a series of spectacular and brutal youth murders had been committed. After young people all over the country demonstrated their disgust, a debate on media violence took off this past Winter.

Now the discussion is in full swing, and it is important to follow the course it takes. And to see that it is followed up with contacts – between institutions, organizations and individuals, and among policy-makers.

MIKA LARSSON
Journalist
and
Formerly Cultural Attaché,
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Screen Violence

An Issue for International Co-operation among Film Regulators

SINCE THE MID-EIGHTIES the film regulators, or film censors, have met each fourth year at international conferences to debate internal issues and problems for this very specific group of professionals. These conferences have mostly been held in London, with participants from all the continents. Since the media situation is changing drastically all over the world, topics that used to be of national concern are now more or less international. Violence in the media is undoubtedly an international problem.

When the fourth international conference was held in Sepember 1996 in London the topic was "Screen Violence". About one hundred delegates took part during five days of lecturing and intensive debates.

National surveys on the nature and dimensions of TV violence were presented: one from Germany, one from the United Kingdom and two from the United States. Of the American studies, one is a project of three years, still going on. The effects of media violence were also reported on, as were studies about the attraction of violent movies.

Another theme was sexual violence and violence to women. A study on sexual violence in mainstream films was presented, and an additional study concluded that the social and ethnic backgrounds of the audience are of outmost importance for the influence film violence exerts on women.

One day of the conference treated the new media, computer games and the Internet. There were demonstrations of what can be found on the Internet and different systems of selfregulation were discussed.

The last day dealt with various systems of classification and consumer information for film, video, and television. Media education as an important tool for the

future was discussed, with different models and ideas in focus. Finally, the importance of more research in the field of violence on the screen was underlined.

IT LOOKS AS IF THE TOPIC OF VIOLENCE on the screen is now on the agenda of further international conferences. As the internationalization of the media sector is increasing, the task of how to handle the problem – with legislation, producer responsibility, consumer advice, media education and research – will be an issue for international co-operation in the future.

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Media Education Research Section of IAMCR

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MASS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH (IAMCR) is a large international professional organisation in the field of communication research. Established in 1957, the Association has over 2.300 members in some 70 countries.

Every two years IAMCR holds a General Assembly and Scientific Conference. Each of these events attracts between 300 and 600 members from more than 40 countries. (Smaller topical conferences are organised in between these bi-annual general conferences. In 1997, the topical conference takes place in Oaxaca, Mexico, on July 3-6.)

Much of the activity of IAMCR is carried out in its various sections and working groups. One section focuses on Media Education Research. President of this section is Birgitte Tufte, Denmark.

The 20th General Assembly and Scientific Conference of IAMCR, *Shifting Centres*, took place on August 18-22, 1996, in Sydney, Australia.

The following papers were on the programme of the Media Education Research Section:

SESSION I
Media Autonomy (Critical Autonomy) and Media Competence, *Mag. Susanne Krucsay*, Austria.

Trends and Differences in America and Canadian Media Education, *Gina Bailey*, Association of Media Literacy, Toronto, Canada.

Media Education Research and the Concept of Critical Thinking, *Jaques Piette* and *Luc Giroux*, University of Sherbrooke, Canada.

The Emerging Media Scenario in India: Challenges for Media Education, *Keval J. Kumar*, University of Poona, India.

Educational Media: Theory and Practice in India, *Ila Joshi*, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad.

SESSION II
Curricular Innovation and Mass Media, *Maria Luisa Sevillano Garcia* and *Donaciano Bartolome Crespo*, Universidad Nacional De Educacion A Distancia, Spain.

Convergence & Techno-Culture: Implications for Media Studies, *Carmen Luke*, University of Queensland, Australia.

Using Electronic Networks in Teaching International Communication, *Dina Iordanova*, University of Texas, Austin, USA.

If We Didn't Mention "Media" Wouldn't It Be Easier? Some Thoughts about How to Move Media Education from the Fringe, *Jeanne Prinsloo*, University of Natal, South Africa.

The New Liberal Art of the Information Age in the United States, *George Thottam*, Iona College, USA.

SESSION III
Analysis of the Brazilian Social Communication Courses: A Search in Report on the Curriculum Identity, *Lucilene Cury*, Brazil.

The Education and Training of Interviewers at Communication Studies at Roskilde University, *Jan Krag Jacobsen*, Roskilde University, Denmark.

Fairy Tale in Medialand, *Svetlana Bezdanov Gostimir*, University of Belgrade.

Identity: Presentation of a Media Education Video on the Construction of Selfhood, *K P Jayasankar* and *Anjali Monteiro*, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India.

Children and Product Comprehensibility, Interpretation, and Credibility of Television Commercials, *Florence Chioma Nwachuku*, University of Lagos, Nigeria.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON IAMCR, see Web site: http://auvm.american.edu/~mowlana/frame17.htm

POLICING THE INTERNET
Combating pornography and violence on the Internet – a European approach,
was an international conference held on 13-14 February 1997 in London, organised by the Association of London Government. Topics were, among others, possibilities of technically and legally controlling the net, co-operation from the police, and national and international policy for the future.

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International Research Forum on Television and Children

THE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH FORUM (IRF) on Television and Children is an initiative of the Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) emerging from the World Summit on Television and Children held in Melbourne in March 1995 (see page 14)

The IRF provides an international forum for promoting awareness of the need for research into children and the media, stimulating research as an aid to policy making, exchanging information, and encouraging collaboration on research into children and television.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE IRF continues to grow with more than 500 members from over 45 countries. The newsletter is available free of charge to all members of the IRF. Participation in the IRF is invited from organisations and individuals involved in the regulation of children's television, promoting or conducting research into children and television, and children's television program makers.

The primary mechanism for IRF members to share information is the bi-annual newsletter. Three issues have been produced to date – November 1995, June 1996 and December 1996. The next issue is due in June this year and will include reports on upcoming events and conferences, changes or developments in the area of children's programming regulation, and major research projects with international significance.

IRF members are invited to provide details of research projects which they have completed or are undertaking and these are updated in each issue. Members are also invited to submit articles in any area of relevance to research on children and media.

A copy of the IRF membership list is mailed to all members with each issue of the newsletter. The membership list includes the name and organisational affiliation of each member, as well as their contact details and research interests (where supplied). The list is provided with the aim of enabling members to contact each other directly where there are common research interests and requests for further information.

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CRIN

CHILD RIGHTS INFORMATION NETWORK (CRIN) is a global network of children's rights organisations promoting effective exchange of information concerning children and their rights.

Accessing quality information about children and their lives is a great challenge, not least because of the invisibility of children in decision and policy making, formal data collection, research and analysis. Yet there is a wealth of knowledge, understanding and documentation about the lives of children in non-governmental organisations, UN agencies such as UNICEF, academic institutions and individual researchers.

Operational since January 1996, the network has launched a number of projects:

- a newsletter (3-4 issues per year) sign-posting its readers to publications, meetings, Internet web sites on children's rights as well as project updates and profiles of members.
- a database of member organisations, detailing their activities, information resources, research and publications. The database is available on CRIN's web site and will be published as a paper directory.
- a Web site will become an essential Internet resource on children's rights, holding hard information and providing links to other sites **(http://www.childhub.ch/webpub/crhome).**
- an electronic mailing list, used by CRIN members to post news, announce events, workshops and meetings and pose questions to others tackling children's rights issues.
- an information service on children's rights.

CRIN IS ALSO DEVELOPING a training and capacity building project to address the training needed to document, collect, disseminate and access information on children's rights. Membership is open and free to NGOs, UN agencies, academic institutions and individuals who are committed to the implementation on the Rights of the Child; active in children's rights through programming, research, advocacy or campaigning; and last, but not least, committed to sharing information with others.

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CEM - The Cultural Environment Movement

Upon his retirement in the early 1990s, George Gerbner, professor and Dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia for some 25 years, turned activist.

Gerbner, a leading authority on television research in the USA, follows a multidisciplinary approach, combining perspectives in the fields of sociology, communication theory and cultural theory. His many years of scholarship in the field have made him highly critical of media content and increasing concentration in the media sector. In 1991, Gerbner formed CEM, the Cultural Environment Movement, a coalition of concerned scholars and citizens in the USA and around the world. Some 150 independent organizations and institutions have joined.

LAST YEAR, A FOUNDING CONVENTION was held in St. Louis, Missouri, hosted by Webster University. The Convention adopted a Viewers' Declaration of Independence, a People's Communication Charter with eighteen articles, and an Agenda for Action. In form and spirit they parallel the UN Declaration of Human Rights. One of the main points of the Declaration is: *All children are endowed with the right to grow up in a cultural environment that fosters responsibility, trust, and mutuality rather than force, fear and violence.*

Improving the cultural environment of coming generations is a prime concern of the coalition, and a main point in the Agenda for Action is a project to promote media literacy and critical awareness of the media among young people. Article 11 of the Charter, "Children's rights", states young people's right to *media products that are designed to meet their needs and interests* and to foster their healthy development. The article also states the need to *protect children from harmful media products and commercial exploitation.*

GEORGE GERBNER is especially sensitive to the issue of violence. Violent content serves as a *lingua franca*, a means to sell products on the global market, irrespective of cultural boundaries. His research has established that people who are exposed to considerable amounts of media violence tend to be more fearful than others. His theory is that the media foster a culture of victims, which in the longer term creates a climate of fear, mistrust and dependence in society. Media violence does not threaten the social order, it reinforces it.

Gerbner took 'his' researchers in the Cultural Indicators project with him when he left Annenberg. They are affiliated with CEM and share its offices on the university campus.

CEM IS ONE OF SEVERAL ORGANIZATIONS with the aim of revitalizing participatory democracy in the USA. Others include the Center for Living Democracy, The Kettering Foundation, National Issues Forum Institute, and Public Agenda. They are concerned by the fact that so many citizens seem to be overwhelmed with a feeling of powerlessness and vulnerability. To remedy this situation the groups seek to broaden the concept of democracy along the lines of the U.S. Constitution and to act on issues of importance to the citizenry. Among other things, CEM and affiliated organizations are of the opinion that media representations of conflict in terms of 'black and white' undermine people's capacity to understand complex problems such as race relations, abortion and threats to the environment.

The coalition is still in its establishment phase, and George Gerbner travels extensively to recruit new affiliates. The Board, meanwhile, includes a number of renowned scholars and debatteurs with expertise in environmental issues, law, the media, consumer issues, sociology and representatives of confessional organizations, civil rights organizations, ethnic minorities and the women's movement. CEM is accessible via Internet and publishes a newsletter, *The Monitor*.

MARIA JACOBSON
Member 'Allt är Möjligt',
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affiliated with CEM

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CHILDNET INTERNATIONAL is a non-profit organisation concerned to enable children to benefit from all the changes in international communications, and to protect them from any negative influences.

Childnet is promoting the interests of Children in International Communications in the areas of research, positive projects, promoting good practice in the industry, educating and informing.

Childnet wishes to encourage positive educational and social contacts using communications systems, between children from different countries and acting as a facilitator, manager and help to find funding for such projects.

Childnet has its international headquarters in London, England, and it also operates in the USA.

This and other information can be found on the Childnet Web site: **http://www.childnet-int.org.**

Childnet can also be reached on **E-mail: info@childnet-int.org**

CIFEJ

THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF FILMS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (CIFEJ) is a 42 year-old international non-governmental organization whose goal is to promote excellence in films, television programmes and videos for children and young people around the world.

CIFEJ currently boasts 160 members in over 52 countries, spanning all the continents of the world. The majority of members are institutions and organizations: broadcasters, film and television producers, children's film and TV festivals, media education groups and specialized cultural groups which work directly with children and the media. Members range from the French broadcaster to street workers in Colombia, and from China's largest production studio to Sweden's smallest distributor.

TO ACCOMPLISH ITS GOALS, CIFEJ undertakes a variety of activities. A monthly newsletter links members and non-members to hard news about the milieu, and lists prizes awarded at recent festivals as well as recent productions. A yearly compendium of these productions is published in French and English and includes information on the companies responsible for the production, distribution, and broadcast of these films and programmes.

The CIFEJ Prize is awarded to exceptional productions at a selection of festivals worldwide. In the past, CIFEJ has organized international discussions, undertaken research on legislation, and acted as a lobby and spokesperson for children confronted by media. The Teen Video Stories project was developed to increase media literacy and offered children at risk in Poland, Peru, Mozambique, the Philippines and Canada the opportunity to create their own three-minute video stories.

CIFEJ IS A NETWORK. It offers the place where North and South, East and West meet, where every child carries the same weight, and where financial preoccupations do not yet set the agenda.

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PRIX JEUNESSE International and WATCH

PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL is a world famous and world embracing competition and festival for children's and youth's television programming held every second year.

The 17th festival 1996, including the special session "Excursion to Cyberspace", broke every record — programme submissions, participants, countries represented — since the event's inauguration in 1964. The next festival will take place on 4-10 June 1998, as usual at Bayerischer Rundfunk in Munich.

PRIX JEUNESSE also initiates and hosts other activities, as round tables, workshops, training courses and seminars for media professionals dealing with how to improve the quality of programmes for children and young people, and how to facilitate television production and co-operation between producers from various continents. PRIX JEUNESSE supports research on children and media, and has arranged seminars on various research subjects, for example violence on television.

AT PRIX JEUNESSE'S ROUND TABLE in 1993 the idea of WATCH — the World Alliance of Television for Children — was launched. This non-profit network, realised the year after and with its headquarters at the office of PRIX JEUNESSE International, includes important organisations and institutions of media practitioners.

WATCH publishes the newsletter *WATCHwords*.

The members have agreed on the following Mission Statement:

- ✓ WATCH believes in affirmative and supportive uses of high-quality television services for young people;
- ✓ WATCH is an extensive global network of organisations and colleagues that willingly share knowledge and expertise so that children might have television that respects their needs, concerns, interests and culture;
- ✓ WATCH shines a spotlight on engaging and beneficial uses of television encouraging others to learn from, and build on, these examples;
- ✓ WATCH reveals both the importance and the vulnerability of children's television, and advocates for its support and improvement.

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ACTF

THE AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S TELEVISION FOUNDATION (ACTF) was established in 1982 by the Ministers of Education across Australia. Its specific brief was to produce quality Australian children's television programming.

Australia has a unique children's regulatory system which not only encourages, but insists, that broadcasters screen a minimum number of hours each year of children's drama programs.

The Foundation's brief coupled with this regulatory system, has meant that large numbers of highly innovative, top-quality, children's drama programs have been produced for children over the past 15 years across an incredible range of styles and genres.

Beginning with the Winners series of eight telemovies and culminating in the recent thirteen part comedy series, The Genie From Down Under, the Foundation has produced over 130 hours of popular, quality programming which has sold into 96 countries and received more than 63 national and international awards, including the prestigious 1994 Prix Jeunesse and International Emmy.

Director *Patricia Edgar* has been the Executive Producer of all the Foundation's programs and was one of the prime movers in Australia in creating our current children's broadcasting regulations.

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E.C.T.C.

THE EUROPEAN CHILDREN'S TELEVISION CENTRE started to operate in 1993. The aims of the founder and director *Athina Rikaki,* and the E.C.T.C., are the restructuring of the children's television market, the continuous training of professionals and the media literacy of children. The Greek Ministry of Press and the Greek Ministry of Culture are officially supporting the development and the E.C.T.C. operations, and the official monitoring body of the activities is the Institute for the Audiovisual Media.

The E.C.T.C. is engaged in the following activities:

- A network of professionals working in the field of media education.
- An electronic audiovisual forum where youngsters around Europe express their ideas and opinions on the audiovisual products of their country.
- An electronic network (Kids' TV Net) which comprises information on the children's television industry. The objectives of *Kid's TV Net* is to facilitate selling and buying and to provide data on children's programmes.
- The E.C.T.C. provides education and training to audiovisual professionals.

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THE NATIONAL TELEVISION VIOLENCE STUDY

Initiated in 1994, the *National Television Violence Study* is a three-year effort to assess violence on U.S. television. The project is funded by the National Cable Television Association (NCTA).

Researchers from four universities are involved. At the University of California, Santa Barbara, violence in entertainment programming is assessed. At the University of Texas, Austin, violence in reality-based shows is examined.

These studies are content analyses, not studies of the effects of television violence on viewers. However, "the core feature of the study of portrayals of violence on television is the use of contextual factors in determining the meaning and impact of any given portrayal. Drawing on prior research indicating that certain contextual features will have negative effects on the viewer (rewarding violence, failing to show consequences, etc.) and others will have positive effects (nonviolent punishment of the perpetrator), the researchers have carefully differentiated harmful and non-harmful portrayals, and have given a clearer picture of the prevalence of problematic televised violence than we have ever had" (Executive Summary, Volume 2, page 6).

The sample of television content is large – it consists of programs selected randomly on 23 television channels to create a composite week of content for each source. More than 3.000 programs were sampled each year.

The project comprises two more studies. At the University of Wisconsin, Madison, violence ratings and advisories used on television are investigated, including their impact on the viewing decisions of parents and children. At the

(continued)

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, researchers examine the effectiveness of anti-violence public service announcements produced by the television industry.

THE ADMINISTRATION AND CO-ORDINATION of the *National Television Violence Study* is conducted by the Center for Communication and Social Policy at the University of California, Santa Barbara. (Till June 1996, the project was co-ordinated and administered by Mediascope, Inc.)

The project also involves the efforts of an oversight Council, comprised of representatives from 17 national organisations that are concerned with the impact of television on society.

Publications from the first year:
National Television Violence Study, Executive Summary 1994-1995 (1996), Mediascope, Inc. (56 pp).
National Television Violence Study, Volume 1 (1996), Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, Inc. (568 pp).

Publications from the second year:
Federman, Joel (Ed) (1997) *National Television Violence Study, Volume 2, Executive Summary*, Center for Communication and Social Policy, University of California, Santa Barbara (60 pp) *National Television Violence Study, Volume 2* (1997), Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, Inc. (561 pp).

RATINGS OF TV-PROGRAMMES – RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

CECILIA VON FEILITZEN
Scientific Co-ordinator

Many media companies, media unions, regulatory bodies or other authorities have guidelines or codes of practices, sometimes laws, for how film, television, home video, electronic games, sound recording, on-line services, etc., should present violence and other potentially problematic media content, especially with regard to children. We have in this newsletter issue given one explicit example – laws, codes and guidelines for violence on television jointly agreed upon in European countries *(see page 8-11)*.

In June 1996, Joel Federman, Center for Communication and Social Policy, University of California, Santa Barbara, formerly at Mediascope, Inc., published a survey of media practices of the above-mentioned kind in thirty-one countries. Five countries were examined in depth: Australia, Germany, Great Britain, Sweden and the United States.

According to the report, the survey was prompted by growing public demand for, among other things, a rating system for U.S. television. Such a demand is fueled by increasing public concern, both in the United States and abroad, regarding the potentially harmful effects of media violence. Politicians, entertainment industry leaders, and media advocacy groups alike have turned to media ratings as a 'middle ground' solution, somewhere between direct government censorship and not addressing the issues at all, the report says. (For reference to the report, and its recommendations for the television industry, see the next article by Laurie Trotta.)

Later, in early 1997, the broadcasting industry in the U.S. launched a rating system for television programming, visible in the form of symbols or icons on the screen. After that, the public has been invited to deliver its viewpoints to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The background is that the Telecommunications Act of 1996, signed into law by President Bill Clinton, requires all newly manufactured television sets to be equipped with a "V-chip" from 1998 onwards. The law also empowers the FCC to create a rating system for television (required for the "V-chip" to function as a blocking device), if the television industry does not establish a viable rating system of its own.

The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRCT) announced a deadline of September 1996 for broadcasters to launch a "V-chip"-based television classification system to help parents protect their children against excessive television violence. The broadcasting industry requested additional time, and proposed a classification system to CRCT in the end of April 1997. The new implementation date is September 1997.

France introduced a classification and rating system of TV programmes at the end of 1996. As mentioned in the article on European media measures, the possible joint European introduction of a "V-chip" has been postponed. The rating system in France, agreed upon by the television industry and the regulatory body, Audiovisual Superior Council (CSA), but put into effect by the television channels themselves, is seen as an informative tool for parents and children when choosing programmes.

Australia and New Zealand were, however, the first countries to adopt a visible co-regulated classification system for television. Broadcasters who get licences from the Australian Broadcasting System (ABA) were required according to a law in 1992 to ensure that all television programmes have a rating assigned to them. In 1993 the broadcasting industry put forward such a joint classification system. There has, however, been no decision on a "V-chip".

The following articles present research findings in connection with these classifications and rating systems.

Television Ratings Should Describe, Not Judge, Programmes

LAURIE TROTTA,
Director of Communications, Mediascope, Inc.

Joel Federmans report *Media Ratings. Design, Use and Consequences*, Mediascope, Inc., 1996 – published before TV ratings were introduced in the United States – gives the following recommendation: The television industry should adopt a rating system which informs the public about violence, sex and language in programming without judging television content. This approach would satisfy consumer needs for information while respecting freedom of expression.

Besides surveying media rating practices, the report also examines the political, economic and social impact of ratings, including the effects of ratings on audiences and entertainment industry profits. It warns that ratings such as those proposed for television should be as isolated as possible from political and economic considerations that might tend to taint the process.

THE RECOMMENDATION that ratings should be descriptive, or designed to inform consumers while minimizing judgments about content, means, among other things, allowing individuals to decide for themselves whether specific programming is suitable for their homes. "Descriptive rating is similar to food labelling, which provides information about food ingredients such as fat and sodium without commenting on who should or should not eat those ingredients", says Joel Federman. "On a television program or film, descriptive ratings would list such items as 'moderate violence' or 'brief nudity', for example, without making judgments as to its suitability for particular audiences."

DESCRIPTIVE RATINGS contrast with the more evaluative or judgmental ratings and advisories such as the 'parental discretion' labels sometimes attached to television shows and music recordings, as well as the Motion Picture Association of America's 'PG (parental guidance)-13' and 'R (restricted)' ratings. Making personal judgments about violence, sex and other social issues as the basis for ratings has several disadvantages, according to the report. The first is that such ratings may actually run the risk of attracting younger viewers instead of discouraging them. Second, evaluative ratings are less reliable as a source of information for consumers than descriptive ratings, and are often inconsistent across issues of sex, violence, and language.

TO IMPLEMENT a non-judgmental rating system, the report suggests, the television industry could create a standardized process to determine intensity levels of violence, sex, or language. A standardized approach would ensure that ratings are consistently applied and would be particularly useful in a medium such as television, where the volume of shows to be rated can exceed 2.000 per day.

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Critique of the New Rating System for United States Television

JOANNE CANTOR,
Professor, Department of Communication Arts
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Recently, the United States television industry began implementing a new rating system for content. This rating system was the result of a law passed in early 1996 that mandated that new televisions be manufactured with a "V-chip," which will permit parents to block objectionable content.

The law urged the television industry to develop a rating system, readable by the V-chip, that would inform parents about the types of content they may consider harmful. Under the proposed system, producers will rate their own programs. The usefulness of the V-chip to parents rests heavily on the adequacy of the rating system. According to the legislation, it is up to the Federal Communications Commission to determine whether the rating system is acceptable.

The new system, referred to as "The TV Parental Guidelines", is based on the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) Ratings that have been used for U.S. movies for 28 years. Although the new system involves a separate rating system for programs that are considered to be designed for children ("TV-Y, All Children," and "TV-Y7, Directed to Older Children"), other programs are designated with one of four ratings that are very similar to the MPAA ratings: "TV-G, General Audience," "TV-PG, Parental Guidance Suggested," "TV-14, Parents Strongly Cautioned," and "TV-M, Mature Audiences Only".

THE NEW RATING SYSTEM has been roundly criticized by most mental health, medical, and child advocacy groups, who argue for a rating system that indicates the content of individual programs rather than giving a recommendation of the age of the child who should see it. As a researcher of the psychological impact of television on children, and one who has been investigating television ratings intensively for three years, I agree with the criticisms of the new rating system, and I base these criticisms on the following research findings:

FIRST, the TV Parental Guidelines are the opposite of what parents want. Five independent national surveys have shown that parents do not want age-based ratings that fail to specify the content of individual shows. In "landslide" proportions, parents prefer a rating system that provides information on the level of violent and sexual content in a program, similar to a system currently used on the premium cable channels HBO and Showtime, over one that provides a recommendation as to the age of the child who should see it, as exemplified in the MPAA Ratings and the new TV system.

SECOND, the TV Parental Guidelines fail to convey critical content information that parents need in order to limit their children's access to programs they consider harmful. Surveys indicate that different parents feel differently about the impact of televised violence vs. sex vs. coarse language on their children. If the highly similar MPAA ratings are any indication, a rating such as TV-PG will not give parents advance notice of the type of content to expect in a program.

Analyses of movies rated by the MPAA over the past two years show that the rating of PG indicates a wide diversity of content types. For example, 26% of the movies rated PG had neither violence nor sex, but only adult language, and another 18% had neither violence, sex, nor adult language. This diversity and lack of specificity of content in PG-rated movies suggests that the content of a program rated TV-PG will be totally unpredictable. The TV rating system tells parents a program may contain sex, violence, language, or something else, but it will not tell them which of these it contains.

THIRD, the TV Parental Guidelines are expected to increase, rather than reduce children's exposure to harmful programming. In research we conducted for the National Television Violence Study, the MPAA ratings of "PG-13: Parents Strongly Cautioned," and "R: Restricted" made many children more eager to see a movie, and the "G: General Audiences" rating made them much less interested. In contrast, content labels such as "mild violence" and "graphic violence," and the advisory "contains some violent content" did not make children more interested in a program.

IN SUMMARY, the new TV rating system is the opposite of what parents overwhelmingly want; it fails to disclose information about the content of specific programs that parents need; and rather than discouraging children's viewing, it is apt to lure children to the programs we are trying to shield them from. In short, research shows that the new ratings not only are not helpful, they are a good deal worse than no rating system at all. The research also shows that content labels are superior to age guidelines on all three counts. I hope that the Federal Communications Commission will agree with parents, researchers, and child advocates, and declare the new rating system unacceptable. I also urge other countries to heed the findings of research and provide their viewers with content labels rather than age-based ratings.

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A NEW BOOK FROM NORDICOM

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Optimism in France

CECILIA VON FEILITZEN
Scientific Co-ordinator

"In French surveys, more than eight TV viewers out of ten have declared that they find television programmes too violent. We have tried to find a solution where we both protect children and young people, and at the same time, the independence of the broadcasters."

So said Hervé Bourges, president of the French regulatory body, Audiovisual Superior Council (Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel; CSA) at a round table for regulators at the Forum "Youth and Media – Tomorrow", 21-25 April 1997, in Paris (see page 17). His speech contained, among other things, the following information:

THE SOLUTION ADOPTED by the CSA – after many talks with broadcasters, public authorities, and representatives of family and TV viewer associations, and after a detailed study of foreign systems – is regarded as naturally fitting into the legal framework and, as well, into the French tradition of freedom of speech. CSA has, thus, chosen to favour self-regulation on the part of broadcasters, on the one hand, and public information on the other.

Film ratings have existed in France for a long time. This principle has now been extended to television, for protecting young viewers and as an educational tool for the audience.

THE TELEVISION INDUSTRY, that is, the national channels France 2 and France 3, and the private channels M6 and TF1 (all non-crypted), have agreed to classify the programmes into five categories:

I. programmes for the whole audience – these can be broadcast at any time and have no visible icons;
II. programmes containing certain scenes which could be harmful to young viewers – these programmes shall not be broadcast during time blocks reserved for children's programming, and are marked with *a green circle;*
III. films not allowed for children under 12 years of age, and programmes that could be harmful to young viewers because of, for example, repeated physical or mental violence – these films shall be broadcast after 22.00, and are marked with *an orange triangle;*
IV. films not allowed for children under 16 years of age, and erotic or very violent programmes that could seriously harm the physical, mental or moral development of young people – these films shall be broadcast after 22.30, and are marked with *a red square;*
V. programmes with pornography or extreme violence that could seriously harm the physical, mental or moral development of young people – these programmes are not allowed on non-crypted channels and can only be transmitted on crypted channels between midnight and 5 o'clock in the morning.

This rating system has been implemented since 18 November 1996 (for the private TF1 and M6 since 1 January 1997).

THE FIRST SURVEYS in the middle of January 1997 indicated that the majority of persons interviewed, and especially parents with young children, were acquainted with the symbol system. Most viewers also found the system useful. Another survey performed in March 1997 with young viewers, showed that most of them appreciated the symbols.

The analysis of the first audience figures is quite eloquent, according to Mr Bourges: over the first three months of the implementation of the rating signs, the presence of children and teenagers in front of the television set in the early evening decreased for programmes marked with green circles or orange triangles. The decrease was in the order of one third of the child audience, both among 4-10-year-olds and 11-14-year-olds, for all channels in question. The only exception was for 11-14-year-olds and France 3, where the film "Jaws" had been broadcast. As relatively few programmes on France 2 and France 3 had an orange triangle during the period, this film raised the average.

The analysis also showed that the private channels, particularly M6, had broadcast the lion's share of the programmes marked with icons, and that about 80 per cent of the programmes with green circles and orange triangles were of non-European (read, American) origin. For programmes marked with a red square the proportion was the reverse; they mostly consisted of erotic French and European films on channel M6.

The analysis further revealed that programmes with icons were seldom transmitted during the daytime.

Generally, not more than 15 per cent of the classifications were debatable, Mr Bourges said. They mainly concerned police series broadcast during daytime, and action films classified for the whole audience, i.e. without a symbol, which could have been attributed a green circle. There is a continuous discussion between the Council and the industry about the classifications.

IN SUM, record to date of the new rating system for television programmes in France seem to be cause for optimism. It remains to be seen if audience trends will last, or become more clear, or if it is a question of a novelty effect. It will also be interesting to hear about more detailed analyses for different programme types and for different groups of children.

Audience Reactions to Classification Systems – The Australian Experience

MARGARET CUPITT,
Senior Research Officer and
DANIEL JENKINSON, *Senior Research Officer*
Australian Broadcasting Authority

The television, video and computer games industries in Australia have operated under government regulated and co-regulated systems of classification for many years.[1] These systems assist the community to select material for themselves and to assist adults who want to protect young people in their care from certain material which they judge to be unsuitable.

During 1995, the Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) commissioned two national studies that included an examination of community awareness and use of the classification systems.

One of these studies, *Families and electronic entertainment*, was conducted jointly with the Office of Film and Literature Classification and covered the respective media interests of each agency (television, video and computer/video games). This unique study identified how young people spend their time, parental concerns about electronic entertainment and household rules and routines. The sample for this Australia-wide study was 743 parents matched with 743 children and teenagers (8 to 17 years of age).

THE STUDY FOUND active supervision by parents, which included setting rules about doing homework, and restricting exposure to television programs, videos and games with certain classifications.

Eighty-two per cent of parents said they had rules about *when* television could be watched by young people, and 79 per cent had rules about *what* could be watched on television. Seventy-five per cent of parents had rules about *when* computer/video games could be played, and 56 per cent had rules about *what* games could be played. A majority of parents also said they had rules about video.

Many parents said they used the classification systems. Out of those parents who reported having rules about what young people could watch, 28 per cent said their child was not allowed to watch M classified programs on television, and 30 per cent said they weren't allowed to watch MA classified programs.[2]

The rules about content that were mostly reported by parents included not being allowed to watch too much violence or fighting (47 per cent) and not too much sex, kissing or nudity (41 per cent).[3]

The content rules relevant to computer/video game play were similar to television, but most rules were generally mentioned by a smaller proportion of parents. Fourteen per cent of parents said their child was not allowed to play either M or MA classified games.

THE ABOVE FINDINGS may not fully represent the proportion of parents and guardians in Australia who actually use the classification symbols. It should be noted that the questions about rules were asked in an open-ended way and some parents may not have mentioned the classifications specifically. It is possible that parents who did not allow violent or sexual content also used the classifications, especially given that consumer advice is provided with each classification indicating the level of sex and violence in television programs.

There is also a need to understand other aspects of the Australian regulatory framework, in particular, the Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice which regulate most aspects of program content including the classification of programs.

One important feature of the code is that it specifies the times at which programs are broadcast on television. In addition, provisions in the code require broadcasters to take into account the likely composition of the audience, particularly the number of children likely to be watching at particular times of the day. M classified programs cannot be broadcast before 8.30 p.m. and MA classified programs cannot be broadcast before 9.00 p.m. In the *Families and electronic entertainment* study, 12 per cent of parents said their child was not allowed to watch television after a set bedtime.

THE NATURE OF CLASSIFICATION USE in Australia by parents and guardians depend on the age of the child in question. For instance, 52 per cent of parents of children aged 8 years said their child was not allowed to watch M classified television programs, while seventeen per cent said they had the same rule for teenagers aged 17 years. The younger the child, the more rules were reported by parents and young people.

In general, reports about household rules for media use declined markedly for teenagers aged 15 years and over. This reflects the 15 year age threshold used in the classification systems for television, and film and video (represented by the M and MA classification symbols).

In the *Families and electronic entertainment* study, young people were asked the same questions as parents about the rules that applied in their household. When the responses were matched, there was a high level of consistency, but, it was also found that parents tended to report more rules than young people. For instance, for the rule about not being allowed to watch MA classified television programs, the child and parent in 76 per cent of households gave consistent responses about whether this rule was in place, in 18 per cent of households parents said the rule existed when the child did not, and in 6 per cent of households young people said the rule existed and the parent did not. The discrepancy may be due to young people wanting others to see them as relatively free from their parent's influence.

On the other hand, the parents in the survey may have wanted to be seen as 'good' parents who frequently apply rules. The study also supported the idea that young people were not fully aware of all the monitoring

behaviours of parents. It is not possible from this research to determine the reasons for discrepancies, but it is probably reasonable to assume that each had an impact and the actual level of supervision lies somewhere between parent and child reports.

THE SECOND STUDY COMMISSIONED by the Australian Broadcasting Authority in 1995 monitored the effectiveness of the Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice by specifically looking at community awareness and use of the television classification system.

The research consisted of an Australia-wide survey with 1.159 respondents aged 14 years and over. Findings showed that 81 per cent of respondents could recall one or more of the classification symbols. More women claimed they used the classification advice than men to decide if a child should watch a program on television (60 per cent of women compared to 48 per cent of men).

Eighty-five per cent of respondents demonstrated a reasonable understanding of the purpose and intention of the M classification for television. Fewer respondents understood the purpose and intention of the MA classification with 76 per cent demonstrating a reasonable understanding. The majority of respondents (86 per cent) had noticed oral or written consumer advice given at the start of television programs informing them about the level of sex, violence, coarse language and adult themes a program would contain. Approximately 80 per cent of respondents said that consumer advice was either 'very useful' or 'somewhat useful'.

BOTH STUDIES HAVE SHOWN that the classification systems for television, video and computer games are important to the Australian community, particularly to adults responsible for the care of young people.
(15 May 1997).

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Notes

[1] Australia has had classification systems for television for 40 years. Since 1992, the Australian Broadcasting Authority has co-regulated the classification system through the Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice which relies primarily on self-regulation. The film/video and computer game industries are required to submit material to the Office of Film and Literature Classification for classification before they can be shown or sold. Film and video classification systems have been in place for 13 years, while the computer games classification system commenced in 1994.

[2] The M classification for television is 'recommended for viewing only by persons aged 15 years or over because of the matter it contains, or of the way this matter is treated'. The MA classification is 'suitable for viewing only by persons aged 15 years or over because of the intensity and/or frequency of violence, sexual depictions, or coarse language, or because violence is central to the theme'. While the classification symbols are largely consistent for television (P, C, G, PG, M, MA), film and video (G, PG, M, MA, R, X) and computer/video games (G, G8, M, MA), their meaning does vary for each different medium.

[3] Percentages for household rules about content add to more than 100 per cent because of multiple responses to the question.

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COMING EVENTS

The All African Summit

THE ALL AFRICAN SUMMIT ON MEDIA FOR CHILDREN, earlier announced to take place in Mauritius, July 21-27, 1997, is postponed, probably to December 1997. At the Summit, relevant issues regarding the quality of media offered to children in Africa will be discussed. The Summit will also discuss the Children's Television Charter, in preparation for the Second World Summit in London in 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, contact:
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The Second World Summit

THE SECOND WORLD SUMMIT on Television for Children will take place on March 9-13, 1998 at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in London. It will be hosted jointly by the BBC, Channel 4 ITV and Nickelodeon UK. The Summit is chaired by Anna Home, Head of Children's Programmes at the BBC.

The Second World Summit is inspired by the first (see page 14) which was very significant in raising the profile of children's programming throughout the world as well as prompting initiatives to promote quality, research and training for those concerned with children's television.

The organisers hope the Second World Summit will attract an even greater number of delegates and speakers

working in broadcasting and production and also those in academic institutions, regulatory bodies and other organisations concerned with children. They are also mindful of the vastly differing conditions that prevail world-wide in broadcasting and that the Summit must address the variety of needs and interests that delegates will bring to it.

THERE WILL BE MAJOR DEBATES on issues such as: supporting indigenous programming in a predominantly English language global marketplace; the boundaries and taboos of children's television; problems of raising finance, locally and internationally, and the rapidly expanding multi-channel world and its implications for children.

The new media world of interactive programmes, CD-roms, the Internet and electronic games and their impact will also be demonstrated and debated, and the Summit will start with a debate on the nature of the child audience.

There will also be daily masterclasses with a strongly practical emphasis given by distinguished practitioners on the production of drama, animation, factual, light entertainment and pre-school programmes for children. There will be classes on the crafts of writing and directing and designing for these genres and series on putting together co-productions.

Other workshops and sessions will cover subjects such as merchandising, blockselling, programming for teenagers, children's participation in programme-making; planning telecommunications infrastructures in developing countries for a new generation; distance learning; media education for children; programming in countries with multi-lingual and multi-cultural populations and training future children's programme makers.

Also planned is a children's event for which 50-75 children aged 10-13 from all over the world will gather at the conference centre to take part in their own events, workshops and discussions as well as to participate in many of the main summit sessions both on the platform and in the audience.

THE SUMMIT COMMITTEE welcomes suggestions for sessions and speakers so if you would like to contribute ideas **please contact:**

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American Summit in 2000 — The World is Welcome

PROOF OF THE UTILITY of the First World Summit on Children's Television launched by the Australian Children's Television Foundation in 1995 is that it provided the incentive for others to pick up the torch – see information about regional and global summits in this newsletter. And in May of 2000 there will be a Summit of the Americas in Toronto, Canada.

Within the countries of the North, Central and South America exist the full range of production, distribution and financing problems that seem to affect all developed and developing countries. The need for media education exists in all of them as well.

While the program of Summit 2000 will be driven by the concerns and issues of children's television in the Americas, delegates from around the world will be welcome. Planning is already underway to assemble travel assistance for delegates with limited resources so that equitable participation is assured.

The right of children to quality programming that is developmentally appropriate and culturally relative is the principle around which the conference agenda is being set.

Television itself is evolving as new forms of program delivery emerge. Looking several decades ahead we can anticipate even more complex environments in which programming for children will have to struggle for priority and recognition.

In addition to a program market, there will be opportunities for professional development for programmers, producers and creators, sessions at which to challenge some of the assumptions that have become the conventional wisdom of children's television, investigation of alternative financing models for production, distribution and program exchange, as well as for those interested in the field of media education.

The intent is to broaden the understanding of the impact of media on young people, and to spark the development of new strategies for creating, refining, marketing and financing promising program concepts that will enhance the international menu of children's television.

KEALY WILKINSON
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The Alliance for Children and Television

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International Conference on Culture and Development

Our Creative Diversity – A Critical Perspective

Lillehammer, Norway, 5-7 September 1997

Of four working groups, one will be devoted to **Children and Young People.**

The purpose of the conference is to build on the work done by the World Commission on Culture and Development, embodied in the report *Our Creative Diversity*, UNESCO, 1995, by further examining in a critical, but constructive, manner the two themes of 'global ethics and cultural diversity' and 'creativity and communication'. The conference is primarily intended for researchers from a variety of backgrounds who are interested in linking the cultural aspects of development more closely to political agendas. Politicians and others who take a special interest in these problems are also welcome.

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II World Meeting on Media Education

May, 18th – 20th 1998, and

International Congress on Communication and Education

May, 20th – 24th, 1998, in Sao Paulo, Brazil

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IN 1995, THE I WORLD MEETING ON MEDIA EDUCATION was held in La Coruña, Spain. As one result, the World Council for Media Education (WCME) was created in 1996. WCME is an international forum of representatives – researchers, educators and non-governmental organisations – committed to media education. A committee of WCME is organising the II World Meeting on Media Education.

The aims of the World Council for Media Education are:

1. to foster and promote Media Education at the primary, secondary and higher education levels,
2. to link Media Education practices to changing ideas about teaching and learning,
3. to support the concept of democracy and promote the role of Media Education in the development of democratic citizenship, practices and principles,
4. to explore equality of access and democratic uses of media,
5. to provide a global forum for discussion of theory and practice,
6. to promote an expanded notion of the concept of "literacy",
7. to encourage the development of high quality applied research,
8. to disseminate information about developments and practices appropriate to different cultural contexts including curricular resources, teaching methods, assessment and learning outcomes,
9. to offer advice to administrators, policymakers, industry, practitioners and others about Media Education,
10. to create meaningful links with the Third World that create mutual understanding and support,
11. to explore how new communication technologies impact on society and on education.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE
THE NEWSLETTER IN THE FUTURE?

If you have not yet registered in the Clearinghouse network, please contact

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European Conference on
Children & Culture
March, 12-14, 1998 in Stockholm, Sweden

The conference *Children & Culture*, a joint initiative by organisers associated to 'Stockholm – Cultural Capital of Europe 1998', will take place in connection with the UNESCO International Governmental Conference on Culture and Development in Stockholm next year.

With the Convention on the Rights of the Child as the frame of reference, *Children & Culture* will focus on the following themes, among others:

- children and young people as cultural actors
- children's democratic access to the cultural expressions and to their cultural heritage
- media, pluralism and freedom of experience
- school as a cultural environment.

The full programme – with plenary sessions, key-note speakers, work-shops and round-table discussions, as well as visits to schools and meetings with children and young people as cultural actors – will be available at the beginning of Autumn 1997. The conference language is English.

FOR ADDITION TO THE MAILING LIST, please contact:
Children & Culture –
Stockholm Cultural Capital of Europe 1998
P.O. Box 163 98, 103 27 Stockholm, SWEDEN
Tel: +46 8 698 1998. Fax: +46 8 698 1999
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Media Education Research IAMCR in Glasgow 1998

The 21st General Assembly and Scientific Conference of the International Association for Mass Communication Research (IAMCR) will be held on July 26-30, 1998, in Glasgow, Scotland. One section of the Association is dedicated to Media Education Research.

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THE CLEARINGHOUSE

We welcome researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organisations and interested individuals to the Clearinghouse information network. As a participant you will receive our publications (in English) with the contributions of other network participants from all parts of the globe. (Participation is free of charge.)

The value of the Clearinghouse as a forum rests in the breadth of its coverage and the commitment of its participants. In short: the more relevant information we gather, and the more who contribute from all continents, the better our services.

We are interested in research related to children, young people and media violence, and in documentation of measures, activities and alternatives of relevance to this field.

News briefs and short articles to our newsletter, *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, will be greatly valued, as will notices of coming and recent conferences, seminars and other events; of new publications; and of active associations and organisations with children and media in view.

We are also grateful for receiving relevant publications and materials – if possible, two copies of each, please! They will successively be informed of in the newsletters, and be documented at the Clearinghouse into a growing knowledge base for overviews, compilations and bibliographies of interest to various groups of users.

As for publications and materials in other languages than English, French, German and Spanish, we kindly ask you for complementary translations of the *titles*.

We look forward to hearing from you, not least regarding any requests or suggestions you may have concerning Clearinghouse services. And we hope that you will come to appreciate our efforts – as a means of making your own work known in wider circles, and as a way to keep abreast of others' work.

Literature, received publications and materials

We will from the next issue of the newsletter publish references to recent published books, articles, reports and other material of relevance to the Clearinghouse activity, including those sent to the Clearinghouse.

Many thanks for all publications and materials already received!

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THE CLEARINGHOUSE IS TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND EFFECTIVIZE KNOWLEDGE ON CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND MEDIA VIOLENCE, SEEN IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD.

NORDICOM
Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research
Göteborg University

NORDICOM is an institution within the Nordic Council of Ministers

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News on Children and Violence on the Screen

Vol 1, No 3 1997

FEAR AND EMOTIONAL RESPONSES – RESEARCH FINDINGS

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A newsletter from

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The Clearinghouse is located at Nordicom

NORDICOM is an organ of co-operation between the Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The overriding goal and purpose is to make the media and communication efforts undertaken in the Nordic countries known, both throughout and far beyond our part of the world.

NORDICOM uses a variety of channels – newsletters, journals, books, databases – to reach researchers, students, decision-makers, media practitioners, journalists, teachers and interested members of the general public.

NORDICOM works to establish and strengthen links between the Nordic research community and colleagues in all parts of the world, both by means of unilateral flows and by linking individual researchers, research groups and institutions.

NORDICOM also documents media trends in the Nordic countries. The joint Nordic information addresses users in Europe and further afield. The production of comparative media statistics forms the core of this service.

NORDICOM is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

The Nordic Information Center for Media and Communication Research (Nordicom) has set up an international clearinghouse on children and violence on the screen. The Clearinghouse receives financial support from the Government of Sweden and UNESCO.

The Clearinghouse is to contribute to and effectivize knowledge on children, young people and media violence, seen in the perspective of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The prime task is to make new knowledge and data known to prospective users all over the world.

The International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen informs various groups of users – about

- research findings concerning children, young people and media violence,
- ongoing research on children and media violence,
- children's access to mass media and their media use,
- training and courses of study on children and the media,
- positive alternatives to media violence, and
- measures and activities which aim to limit gratuitous violence on television, in films, and in interactive media.

The object of the Clearinghouse is three-fold: to attract attention to the question of violence on the screen and its role in the lives of children and young people, to stimulate initiatives and activities to combat gratuitous violence, and to help provide a better basis for policy in the field.

The Clearinghouse is user-oriented, which means that our services are offered in response to demand and are adapted to the needs of our clients.

The Clearinghouse publishes a newsletter and a yearbook.

We welcome researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organisations and interested individuals to the Clearinghouse information network. As a participant you will receive our publications (in English) with the contributions of other network participants from all parts of the globe. (Participation is free of charge.)

The value of the Clearinghouse as a forum rests in the breadth of its coverage and the commitment of its participants. In short: the more relevant information we gather, and the more who contribute from all continents, the better our services.

We are interested in research related to children, young people and media violence, and in documentation of measures, activities and alternatives of relevance to this field (see the six points above).

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Introduction

CECILIA VON FEILITZEN
Scientific Co-ordinator, The Clearinghouse

Research and debate on media violence most often concentrate on its relations to viewers' potential aggression. However, impressions and influences other than aggression have also been in focus – for example, how watching media violence conduces to ideas about violence in society; whether we become habituated to media violence so that our threshold for tolerance is raised; at what points media violence gives rise to fear and similar emotions.

The question of fear and fright is most often brought up with regard to younger children. But older children and adults also become frightened by media violence. In the first section of this newsletter issue, various aspects of fear related to media use are presented. The research articles begin with the small children and direct emotional experiences and move on to older ages and long-term consequences. Further contributions focusing on fear will appear in a coming Clearinghouse publication.

Fear and fright are complicated phenomena. For one thing, elements in media content other than representations of violence may also be frightening. Additionally, persons look for different things in the media – their responses can be most individual. Neither is fear always negative. The capacity for being afraid is a prerequisite for survival. Fear is a signal resulting from threat and danger, which tells that we have to seek shelter, protect ourselves from attacks and accidents, or, in the case of defence, to object to injustice and oppression, that is, 'be aggressive' in a constructive way. Also, horror in drama and fiction can sometimes act as a symbolic illustration, or be part of a learning process. Further, the act of watching violent and horror videos itself can, e.g., among youth, function as a test of one's toughness or as a protest against the adult world, and as such contribute to feelings of identity and group belonging.

Many children and young people like to be a little frightened when viewing – to experience 'wishful fright' – or they may want to see a horror movie in order to experience strong emotions in an otherwise gloomy everyday existence. Fear, on one hand, and fascination and excitement, on the other, are often associated, in particular when viewing fiction. However, excitement that becomes too powerful can turn into fright and terror. And much fear caused by fictional and realistic media content is unnecessary and painful. Media fear, particularly when it is not worked on, may also be connected in intricate psychological ways with other manifestations and actions among viewers – for example, anxiety, depression or destructive aggression.

C3

Children's Fright Responses to Television and Films

JOANNE CANTOR
Professor, Department of Communication Arts
University of Wisconsin

Since 1980, the main focus of my research has been to explore how the mass media frighten children. My interest is in how children's exposure to a single program or movie can produce intense worries, nightmares, and other fear-related outcomes. Through a series of experiments and surveys, and through the examination of retrospective reports by adults of their childhood experiences, I have discovered that intense and disruptive fears are produced by television and movies much more often than most people realize. For example, in a recent random phone survey we conducted in Madison, Wisconsin, 43 percent of the parents interviewed said that their child had been so frightened by something they had seen on television that the fear had lasted beyond the time of viewing. Intense and long-lasting emotional reactions, sleep disturbances, and fear of engaging in normal activities were fairly common responses.

More striking than these numbers, when we asked first-year university students whether they had ever had a lingering fright reaction to a television program or movie, we found an overwhelming response. The students were given the same amount of "extra-credit" in a class, either for saying "no, (they had never had such a reaction)" or for saying "yes"; but the "yes" response required them to describe the experience in a one-page paper and then fill out a three-page questionnaire. To my amazement, 96 of the 103 students given this option chose the "yes" response, and most of them gave graphic and emotional descriptions of the terror that had been produced by a movie or TV show. Almost half of these students said that what they had seen had interfered with their eating or sleeping. More than three-fourths of them said that their reactions had lasted a week or more, and one-fourth said that they were still feeling the residue of the fear that the program or movie had produced, even though they had been exposed to it an average of more than a decade earlier.

The bulk of my research on this topic has been aimed at understanding the types of media images and events that frighten children at different ages and the interven-

tion and coping strategies that are effective for children in different age groups. Using theories and research in cognitive development, we have reached the following generalizations based on our experimental and survey results:

For preschool ("preoperational") children (approximately age 2 to 7), how something looks is the most important determinant of whether it will be scary. At this age, children's thought processes are dominated by whatever is most readily perceptible and whatever does not require reasoning to comprehend. Preschoolers are especially frightened by media images of vicious, attacking animals, "repulsive" creatures, like snakes, bats, and spiders, the graphic display of injuries and physical deformities, and monsters. Preschool children are especially frightened by character transformations, such as when a normal person turns into a vampire before their eyes. They also have trouble understanding that a monstrous looking hero is not a villain. Since they are not fully competent in the fantasy-reality distinction, the fact that something is blatantly fantastic or impossible does not make it less scary.

For older elementary school ("concrete operational") children (ages 8 to 12), the importance of how things look diminishes, as these children begin to take motives into account, reason more abstractly, and understand the difference between fantasy and things that can actually happen. They become more and more likely to be frightened by real stories (like those shown in television news and reality programming) and by fiction that makes them aware of their own vulnerabilities to harm.

AS FOR HELPING CHILDREN COPE with their media-induced fears, preschool children are helped mainly by nonverbal strategies involving physical comfort, warmth, and closeness (e.g., a mother's hug, or a warm drink) or distraction (reducing their exposure to the frightening stimulus or getting involved in other activities). A fear that is not overwhelming can also respond to desensitization (gradual exposure in manageable doses). Older children benefit more from fear-reduction strategies based on reasoning. If the fear-producing show was a fantasy, a reminder that what was seen was not real helps this age group. But for things that really can happen, fear-reduction is more difficult. Honest, absolute, reassuring information may help, but explanations focusing on a dreadful event's low probability are relatively ineffective. Information about how to prevent the dreaded event from happening is welcomed at this age. And the sincere, concerned attention of a parent or adult care giver is what children of all ages seem to seek the most when they are frightened.

I HAVE PUBLISHED THESE FINDINGS in a variety of scholarly outlets, and I have recently completed a book aimed at an audience of parents and other child-care providers (with academics and mental health professionals as a secondary audience). The book is titled *Mommy, I'm Scared! How Television and Films Frighten Children and How We Can Protect Them.* It will be published by Harcourt Brace and is due out in 1998.

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MANY THANKS TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS!

News briefs and short articles to
News on Children and Violence on the Screen,
are greatly valued,
as are notices of coming and recent
conferences, seminars and other events;
of new publications; and of active
associations and organisations
with children and media in view.

DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS
TO THE NEXT ISSUE IS
JANUARY 5, 1998.

Selected individual articles

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What Makes You Unhappy when You Watch Television?

A Survey Carried Out among Children in South Africa

NOREEN RAMSDEN
Co-ordinator, The Peace Education Project

A small informal survey on children's responses to violence on television was undertaken in 1995 by the Southern Natal Children's Rights Committee (SNCRC). Peace has been identified as a priority child-right by children as well as adults in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal since 1990. KZN Province has been particularly affected by political violence since the 1980s with over 500,000 people being rendered homeless and thousands killed in a low-grade civil war, which continues to the present in some rural areas.

Among the peace projects undertaken by the SNCRC was a Toys and Play for Peace campaign. The toys and memorabilia sold in conjunction with certain TV programmes, led us to look more closely at children, violence and television. When we were invited to public hearings on the establishment of a new transformed broadcast service in 1995, we hoped that we could lobby for children's programmes that helped raise peace-makers. Our survey was part of this. At the hearings, however, priority was given instead, and understandably, to promoting anti-racism, equity and democracy.

In 1996 a Children and Broadcasting Summit for Southern Africa Developing Countries (SADC) was held in Johannesburg at which a Children's Broadcast Charter (see page 15) was accepted. Child-delegates (aged between 8 and 16) at that Summit spoke out strongly against violence and sex in programmes that were accessible to children – broadcast before 9 p.m.

FOR THE SURVEY we undertook in 1995, the SNCRC sent out several hundred questionnaires to parents and caregivers of young children and to older children themselves, on how children felt about television programmes currently being broadcast. The most important question we asked was "Are there things you see that make you feel unhappy or uncomfortable?". The words were carefully chosen to form a question that was relevant to children and that they would understand.

Of the 128 forms returned, 14 per cent came from children 8-16, and the remainder were filled in by parents of younger children. In 18 per cent of the total number of forms returned, children claimed that there was nothing that made them feel unhappy or uncomfortable. It was noticeable that most of these came from the black community, where there has been particularly high levels of political and community violence.

Thus, in the great majority of forms (82%), things on television which gave rise to unhappy or uncomfortable feelings were mentioned. Of all children, 48 per cent said that 'killing' or 'people being hurt' or 'blood' or 'people being shot' made them unhappy. 10 per cent complained about 'a dark scary film' or 'scary things' or 'sad' things. 8 per cent were worried when they saw animals being hurt or hunting each other (wild-life films). All these groups were spread fairly evenly across the age range 3-16. Five per cent (mostly boys 8-14) objected to 'love' films or 'too much kissing'. A few children identified 'monsters' as things that made them unhappy or uncomfortable. One mother said that 'things with evil faces' gave her four-year-old son nightmares, and she had had to ban Biker Mice from Mars. A 14-year-old objected to 'cooking programmes with disgusting food' as well as to 'intamacy (the way she spelled it) between adults'. Neither did she like watching domestic violence.

An objection to bad language and immorality – attributed to a 4-year-old – obviously came from a parent. Much of the information was, of course, mediated by a parent and those who quoted the exact words of their child were a delight.

For 48 per cent of the children unhappy and uncomfortable feelings were aroused by programmes specifically aimed at them.

One five-year-old replied to an earlier question on favourite programmes by saying he enjoyed programmes about 'monsters', and then when asked what made him unhappy he said 'monsters' again. This ambivalent attitude to programmes appeared in several replies – Power Rangers and X-Men were some of the programmes that were both liked ('I like their guns') and disliked.

WHEN ASKED WHAT THEY LIKED TO WATCH, it became clear that 44 per cent enjoyed programmes with some violence – such as Power Rangers, X-Men, Spiderman. One is not certain if the remainder – the 56 per cent who preferred friendly, amusing programmes – had their television viewing censored by their parents!

Some of the children's own comments on what they liked were: 'funny programmes', 'things that make you feel nice', 'Power Rangers cause I like their guns', 'Spiderman because he climbs and jumps', 'fighting, karate, super heroes', 'music, songs, animals', 'Spiderman wraps his webs around baddies', 'lots of shooting', 'all the fighting', 'Caspar is a friend to everybody', 'Looney tunes is funny', 'Barney likes to play with his friends, they do funny things'.

Several parents added comments to the questionnaire, saying that they would like their children to see television programmes that promoted non-violent solutions to conflict, and that promoted healthy family values and character traits such as perseverance and respect of others' feelings. Parents also complained of inappropriate advertisements during children's viewing time, particularly those advertising violent films. Another complaint was that inappropriate films with explicit violence and sex are shown during 'family time'.

There was considerable support from parents in Southern Natal for a coalition to raise awareness of the

issues of children and media violence, and to lobby for change, but this has not been taken forward as yet.

AS TO CONCLUSIONS, the value of a survey such as this is limited by the small sample of answers and the vague nature of the questions, among other things. But it can certainly be used to lobby for more suitable children's programmes and to counter arguments that children enjoy violent cartoons. If 48 per cent of children are made unhappy and uncomfortable, at least at times, by programmes aimed specifically at them – like Power Rangers and Biker Mice from Mars – and 56 per cent prefer friendly, amusing programmes, this is a powerful message to broadcasters!

Further research is needed to see if television can play a part in interrupting the spiral of violence – political violence, community violence and criminal violence – that so many of our children in South Africa are caught up in.

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03

Moving Images

Understanding Children's Emotional Responses to Screen Violence

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Politicians and other social commentators persistently look to screen violence as an explanation for violence in society. Public debates on this issue, and consequently most of the research, have tended to focus on the potential danger of imitative effects, particularly on aggression. Yet most parents' primary concern is not that screen violence will make their children aggressive, but that it will upset or disturb them. Their concern is not so much with *behavioural effects* as with *emotional responses*.

IN 1994-95, the Broadcasting Standards Council in the UK funded a study of children's emotional responses to television, undertaken by myself and Mark Allerton. We conducted in-depth small group discussions with 72 children aged between six and sixteen in four London schools, and a further 20 family interviews, in which children and parents were interviewed separately. Tapes of the discussions were transcribed and analysed in considerable detail, paying attention both to the themes which were raised and to the social relationships among the children, and between the children and the interviewer.

The discussions were wide-ranging, and did not only relate to material which some adults perceive as violent. Indeed, it was clear that 'violence' was defined and perceived in very different ways by different groups and individuals. In the book *Moving Images* (see below), I analyse extensive extracts from these discussions. The following is a brief account of the main findings.

WE FOUND THAT the centralised regulation of children's viewing – in the form of video ratings and the television watershed – is widely ignored. Most children had seen material to which they should not legally have been given access. While parents did attempt to restrict their children's viewing, this became increasingly ineffective, and was gradually abandoned, as children entered their teenage years. This was not simply a matter of parents 'letting their standards slip': it was also a result of them actively learning from their own children.

Both parents and children expressed concerns about the effects of television; although, as is often the case, these were frequently displaced onto *other* people. Although some parents were concerned that their children would copy 'play fighting' from television, they trusted that their children understood the difference between fantasy and reality. In fact, their primary concerns in relation to violence were that their children would become frightened or upset.

We found that negative emotional responses to television – fright, disgust, sadness and worry – are common experiences. Most children could recall examples of bad dreams or nightmares, and of real-life fears of victimisation, which were a response to television programmes or videos. The material that provokes such responses is diverse and sometimes unpredictable. Many parents were surprised by the kind of things that had upset their children; and as such, they argued that these experiences were hard to prevent.

HOWEVER, there are common themes in such material, which cut across generic distinctions. Images of bodily violation provoked a complex mixture of disgust and fascination, while many children expressed considerable anxiety about the supernatural. Fears were provoked by threats to small children or animals, whether they

occurred in horror films, in the news, or even in comedies. At the same time, children make distinctions *within* genres: horror films are judged in terms of their technical quality and plausibility, for example.

Nevertheless, these experiences cannot be condemned as straightforwardly negative. In the case of fiction, negative responses are often inextricably connected with positive ones, such as excitement and enjoyment. Many children actively *choose* to be scared out of their wits, or to wallow in the pleasures of a good cry; and some self-consciously test themselves out against such experiences — although of course others try to avoid them. Similarly, in the case of non-fiction or realist drama, negative responses are often perceived to be necessary in order to learn important information about the world. Here again, some children actively avoid such material, while others consciously seek it out, claiming that they have a right to know.

IN BOTH FACT AND FICTION, such responses appear to derive primarily from a fear of victimisation, rather than any identification with the perpetrators of violence. Viewers do not 'become' Freddy Kruger; rather, they 'become' Freddy's victim — or, more particularly, the victim who finally stands up to Freddy and defeats him.

Children develop a variety of coping strategies to deal with these responses. In some instances, they avoid or shield themselves from such material, physically or psychologically, while in others, they actively re-interpret or distance themselves from the text. Questioning the reality status of the text is a crucial strategy in this respect, although its effects are not guaranteed. It is possible to reassure oneself that a story is not real, or that the blood is only tomato sauce; but the boundary between fiction and reality is not always so easy to maintain.

Nevertheless, responses to fiction are quite different to those for non-fiction, as are the coping strategies that are applied. Particularly if they do not understand the context and the causes of what they are seeing, children may find images of violence and suffering in news programmes much more disturbing than similar images in fiction. Films or programmes that cross the boundaries between fact and fiction — such as crime reconstruction programmes — are particularly likely to generate problematic and ambivalent responses.

However, there is no evidence from this study that children are any less upset by *real life* violence as a result of watching *fictional* violence — in other words, that they are desensitised. Children who watch large amounts of fictional violence do, of course, gradually become used to it. But there is no justification for extrapolating from this to their responses to real events.

Finally, we found that parents could help children to cope with such upsetting experiences, and to learn about television in general. Parents could model and teach coping strategies — although they were more effective in this respect if they were seen to take an active interest in their children's viewing, rather than simply acting as censors.

This research has several implications for regulatory policy, which are spelt out in more detail in *Moving Images*. The study supports current moves towards providing more consumer advice for parents and children. Despite the possibility of a 'forbidden fruit' effect, there should be more detailed information for parents (and for all viewers) about the content of programmes and videotapes, particularly where this relates to areas of general concern.

The system of video classification should also be made more informative and accountable to the public. People need to know the reasons why such judgments are made, in order to make sensible decisions on their own and their children's behalf. The age classifications on video — particularly at the upper end (in the UK, for example, we still have an '18' certificate) — should also be reconsidered in the light of changing cultural assumptions about childhood.

The debate about screen violence needs to take much greater account of responses to *factual* material. This research suggests that children may be very distressed by watching incidents of violence and suffering which they cannot understand. This is not to say that such material should not be shown, although there is a case for taking greater care — and particularly for attempting to ensure that children are better informed about such incidents.

Finally, it is important that the debate about children's relationship with television should not become narrowly preoccupied with such negative concerns. Our responsibilities towards children as an audience need to be defined, not merely in terms of prevention and control, but also in terms of the *positive* provision that is made for them. With the advent of new technologies, a great deal more material is becoming available for children — although it is not equally available to all. We need to ensure that children are well served in this new multi-channel environment, not only in terms of quantity, but also in terms of the range and quality of programmes made specifically for them. Media education, both for parents and for children, should be regarded as a major priority. Educational policy-makers must recognise the central role of the media in children's lives, and find ways of enabling them to cope with an increasingly media-saturated environment.

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For further information see:

Moving Images: Understanding Children's Emotional Responses to Television by David Buckingham (Manchester University Press 1996).

Fear, Fright and Distress: A Review of Research into Children's Emotional Responses to Television by David Buckingham and Mark Allerton (Broadcasting Standards Council Working Paper 1996).

Violence in TV Drama

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A U.S. child today is born into a home in which television is on an average of over seven hours a day. By the time children learn to read, and to distinguish news from other stories, they are fully integrated into a television view of the world.

Violence is a stable and integral part of that world. Violent scenes occur about 5 times per hour in prime time, and between 20 and 25 per hour in Saturday morning children's program. They are sugar-coated with humor, to be sure; that makes the pill easier to swallow.

The "pill" is power. Violence is a demonstration of power. Its principal lesson is to show quickly and dramatically who can get away with what against whom. That exercise defines majority might and minority risk. It shows one's place in the societal "pecking order".

THE ROLE OF VIOLENCE in the media mainstream of television emerges from our analysis of prime time network programs monitored since 1967. Women play one out of three characters in drama, one out of six in the news. Young people comprise one-third and old persons one-fifth of their actual proportions of the population. Most other minorities are even more underrepresented. Most of the groups that are underrepresented are also those who suffer the worst fate.

We calculated the violence "pecking order" by counting the number of victims for every ten perpetrators of violence. That "risk ratio" expresses the "price" groups of characters pay for committing violence. We found that overall average risk ratio (the number of victims per 10 perpetrators) is 12. But the ratio for women is 17, for lower class characters is 19, for elderly characters is 20, and for women of color is 22. In other words, minority groups tend to pay a higher price for their show of force than do the majorities.

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES? Our surveys show that heavy viewers express a greater sense of apprehension and vulnerability than do light viewers in the same groups. Heavy viewers are more likely than comparable groups of light viewers to overestimate their chances of involvement in violence; to believe that their neighborhoods are unsafe; to state that fear of crime is a very serious personal problem; and to assume that crime is rising, regardless of the facts of the case. Heavy viewers are also more likely to buy new locks, watchdogs, and guns "for protection" (thus becoming the major cause of handgun violence).

Moreover, viewers who see members of their own group underrepresented but overvictimized develop an even greater sense of apprehension and mistrust. Insecure, angry, mistrustful people may be prone to violence but are even more likely to be dependent on authority and susceptible to deceptively simple, strong, hard-line postures and appeals.

The usual rationalization that media violence "gives the public what it wants" is disingenuous. The public rarely gets a fair choice in which all elements but violence, including placement, headline, promotion, airtime, celebrity-value, treatment, etc., are equal.

We compared the audience ratings of over 100 violent and the same number of non-violent shows aired at the same time on network television. The average Nielsen audience rating of the violent sample was 11.1 percent; the rating for the non-violent sample was 13.8 percent. The share of viewing households in the violent and non-violent samples, respectively, was 18.9 and 22.5. The non-violent sample was more highly rated than the violent sample for each of the five seasons studied. The amount and consistency of violence further increased the unpopularity gap.

WHAT DRIVES VIOLENCE, then, is not popularity. It is global marketing. Concentration of ownership denies access to new entries and to alternative perspectives. Having fewer buyers for their products forces the remaining "content providers" deeper into deficit financing. As a consequence, most television and movie producers cannot break even on the domestic market. They are forced into video and foreign sales to make a profit. Therefore, they need a dramatic ingredient that requires no translation, "speaks action" in any language, and fits any culture. That ingredient is violence.

Our analysis shows that violence dominates U.S. exports. We compared 250 U.S. programs exported to 10 countries with 111 programs shown in the U.S. during the same year. Violence was the main theme of 40 percent of home-shown and 49 percent of exported programs. Crime/action series comprised 17 percent of home-shown and 46 percent of exported programs.

Formula-driven media violence is not an expression of freedom, popularity, or crime statistics. It is a de facto censorship that chills originality and extends the dynamics of domination, intimidation, and repression domestically and globally. The media violence overkill is an ingredient in a global marketing formula imposed on media professionals and foisted on the children of the world.

THERE IS A LIBERATING ALTERNATIVE. It exists in various forms in all democratic countries. It is an independent citizen voice in cultural policy-making. More freedom from inequitable and intimidating marketing formulas, and a greater diversity of sources of support, are the effective and acceptable ways to increase diversity of content. That is also the democratic way to reduce media violence to its valid role and reasonable proportions.

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A NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDY

Young People's Perception of Violence on the Screen

A first summary of a UNESCO media violence study, carried out under the direction of Professor Dr. Jo Groebel, Utrecht University, The Netherlands, was presented to UNESCO in early October 1997.

The purpose of the study, based on questionnaires to more than 5,000 12-year-olds in 23 countries, is to analyse the role of media in children's lives, in particular the perception, fascination and impact of media violence in different cultures. The following countries participated: Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Egypt, Fiji, Germany, India, Japan, Mauritius, The Netherlands, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, South Africa, Spain, Tadjikistan, Togo, Trinidad & Tobago, Ukraine.

Some of the countries have hardly any consistent media infrastructure and have never had any empirical media research on this theme before. Other countries have every imaginable media technology. In addition, several countries witnessed severe actual violence during the period of the study, including civil war, while others had not seen extreme aggression for a long time. These facts make the study unique as regards the relations between children's use of media and media violence, their environment and their experiences of actual aggression.

The final report will be issued in 1998.

AGORA AND KID'S TV NET

The first *AGORA*, organised by the European Children's Television Centre (ECTC) was held in June this year, in Greece. Representatives from 26 countries attended the event.

AGORA is an opportunity for key players of production and research in the international children's audio-visual field, to gather in order to explore the needs of the area, to plan specific productions and research for the following year, and to exchange information and programmes.

Special emphasis is given to the promotion and the improvement of programmes from the Balkan, Mediterranean and small European countries.

AGORA also featured a presentation of KID'S TV NET – a video bank and service on the World Wide Web providing data and visual samples of children's television programmes, as well as information on trends, development and the status of the children's audio-visual industry. Excerpts from programmes can be seen and advertised on **http://www.ectc.com.gr**

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European Policy News on TV and Internet

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The protection of minors against violent and other potentially harmful material on television and the Internet continues to be high on the agenda of European policy makers. During the past few months European ministers have discussed the issue on several occasions. Meanwhile the European Commission is working on new initiatives in the field.

Meeting on June 27th in Luxembourg, EU telecommunications ministers took stock of state-of-the-art techniques for dealing with undesirable material on the Internet. The ministers were unwilling to use EU laws to address these issues, and urged self-regulation via electronic labeling systems for warning users when content is unsuitable for under-age children. They also stressed the criminal liability of people transmitting unlawful material, such as child pornography, over the network and called for mutual cooperation between countries to get to grips with the matter.

A few days later, on June 30th, EU ministers responsible for audiovisual and cultural affairs heard a presentation of the work done so far by the Commission with regard to the protection of minors in audiovisual and information services. The ministers were in broad agreement with the Commission's approach recommending better coordination of national responses, closer cooperation and the pooling of experience at European and international level.

THE ISSUE WAS ALSO BROUGHT UP during a European ministerial conference in Bonn on July 6-8th. At this meeting ministers from all over Europe, including Central and East European countries, discussed problems related to the global information networks. Present were also guests from Russia, the United States, Canada and Japan.

In their joint declaration the ministers underline that any regulatory framework should, "strike the right balance between the freedom of expression and the protection of private and public interests, in particular the protection of minors..." To this end the ministers, "encourage industry to implement open, platform-independent content rating systems, and to propose rating services which meet the needs of different users and take account of Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity."

Furthermore, the ministers, "stress the importance of the availability of filtering mechanisms and rating systems which allow users to decide on categories of content which they wish themselves, or minors for whom they are responsible, to access."

As for the difficult question of responsibility for content on the networks, the ministers declare that, "intermediaries like network operators and access providers should, in general, not be responsible for the content... In any case, third-party content hosting services should not be expected to exercise prior control on content which they have no reason to believe is illegal." And they add, "...rules on responsibility should give effect to the principle of freedom of speech, respect public and private interests and not impose disproportionate burdens on actors."

As for illegal content, the ministers promise to "actively encourage the reinforcement of police and judicial cooperation, to prevent and combat illegal content and high technology crime." They also, "support the establishment of international networks of hot-lines."

IN THE EARLY AUTUMN, EU Commissioner Martin Bangemann, responsible for industrial affairs, information technology and telecommunications, brought up the issue on several occasions. In a speech on September 8th in Geneva, he called upon "governments, regulators and industry to work together to establish a new, global framework for communications for the next millennium". Among the issues to be covered by such a regulatory framework he mentioned the "protection against illegal and harmful content". He stressed that the idea was not to impose detailed rules, "except in particular circumstances where it is clearly necessary, such as combating child pornography and terrorist networks".

In another speech on September 18th, the Commissioner declared: "If the Internet is to develop into a virtual space for learning, parents need to be reassured that they can exert parental control over the content for which their children have access. Tools should be placed at their disposal should they wish to protect their children from...content, such as pornography, racism, pedophilia networks and violence."

MEANWHILE, the European Commission is drafting a so-called Communication as well as a proposal for a Council Recommendation on the issue. As part of this work, the Commission has recently launched a "discussion forum" on the Internet as a complementary consultation tool addressing four specific questions: labeling, rating and filtering systems on the Internet; raising awareness and education of Internet users; promoting quality content for children on the Internet; monitoring and evaluation of relevant policies and initiatives.

Contributions to the discussion of any of these issues are welcome in English or any official language of the European Union. The forum can be reached on the **Internet at: europa.eu.int/en/comm/dg10/avpolicy/forum/index.html.** The purpose of this discussion forum is also, "to encourage networking of organizations and individuals actively establishing measures to ensure the protection of minors and human dignity in audiovisual and information services," writes the Commission. ▪

LfR in Germany

THE LANDESANSTALT für Nordrhein-Westfalen (LfR) is one of fifteen regional regulatory authorities for broadcasting in the Federal Republic of Germany. It is responsible for licensing and controlling private broadcasting in Northrhine-Westfalia. From the very beginning of its existence, i.e., since 1987, it was very much occupied with establishing a viable commercial broadcasting sector in the state. Today, there are three terrestrial (RTL NRW, SAT 1 NRW, Vox) and five satellite (Viva, Viva 2, Nickelodeon, Super RTL, Wetter- und Reise-TV) broadcasters with a licence from the LfR, forty-six terrestrial local radio stations (one as a monopolist in each big city or county), nine public access channels in cable-TV and one satellite home-shopping channel (QVC) as part of a pilot project for new programmes and digital services.

The LfR has two organs. On the one hand, the broadcasting commission with forty-five (honorary) members from various groups of society (churches, trade unions, welfare and sports organizations etc., but also thirteen members nominated by the state diet). On the other hand, the permanent staff with a director elected by the commission and fifty employees.

RESPONSIBILITY to the public and quality of programmes were and are the two main guidelines of the LfR's work. In order to shape and influence the broadcasting sector in that direction, the LfR regularly commissions a certain number of research projects. The first big project was the one by Jo Groebel about violence on the screen, which caused a huge public debate in Germany and resulted in a much higher awareness among broadcasters, politicians and parents about their respective responsibilities. Children and advertising was the topic of a another big project. There has also been a study on the problems and additional requirements for education in families caused by the inflation of TV-programmes (for references see page 20). These and other projects were meant to influence the public debate and shape the broadcasting sector in a way which cannot be achieved by simply monitoring programmes or passing programme guidelines.

As a result of its efforts in this field, the LfR has been able to set the agenda for some of the most urgent and at the same time most controversial debates about the role and the quality of television in Germany. It will try to continue to do so, especially in the wake of digitalization, which will change the character of broadcasting fundamentally, not only in one country but all over the world. The role of national broadcasting systems in the global information society will be a matter of concern for the future work of the LFR.

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CREATING A SPACE FOR CHILDREN

High-quality films and programmes for children require the benevolent attention of governments – for production financing and for time and space to propose these productions to their audience.

To draw attention to the need for supportive action in this regard, CIFEJ has undertaken a series of publications entitled *Creating a Space for Children*. The first in the series, covering the regulations and legislation of the European Union and Norway, was published in 1996. The second volume, comprising the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, was published in September 1997.

Creating a Space for Children has two objectives. First, it quantifies the situation, country by country, across a given region. This allows CIFEJ to speak with authority when it addresses the needs of a specific group of children. Second, it endeavours to outline concerns specific to each region.

The publications are designed to provide media-makers with a tool. They can use it in discussions with parents' groups and teachers to rally support for more and better production specifically made to respond to children's needs. They can lobby the policy-makers and the economists who decide upon the distribution of a country's wealth. They can move the cause of excellence in children's media higher on the national agenda.

Creating a Space for Children – Volumes 1 and 2 are available upon request from the CIFEJ secretariat. Volume 1 = $15 USD. Volume 2 = $20 USD.

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CANADIAN REGULATION OF MEDIA VIOLENCE, ADVERTISING AND STEREOTYPES

André H. Caron and Annie E. Jolicœur (1996) *Systemized Summary of Canadian Regulations Concerning Children and the Audiovisual Industry/Synthèse de la réglementation canadienne concernant les enfants et l'industrie audiovisuelle*, Centre de recherche en droit public (CRDP), Faculté de droit, Université de Montréal, co-published by Centre for Youth and Media Studies (CYMS)/Groupe de recherche sur les jeunes et les médias (GRJM).

This book, issued in both English and French, brings together the data on Canadian regulation and self-regulation related to children and television, film, video. The measures reflect the collective desire to further the well-being and rights of children, bearing the supralegal principle of freedom of expression in mind. Compiling the appropriate documents is difficult since many of the measures are recorded outside the body of state legislation and regulations, and because of the important role played by self-regulation in many sectors.

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Changes on the Argentine Screen

A Case of Self-Regulation in the Broadcasting Industry?

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As of August this year (1997), Argentine private television broadcasting stations made a commitment to stop sending film trailers containing violent images, sex, drug use and homosexuality within the child protection time-period. According to the current radio broadcasting law (22.285/80), this time-period extends from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

In addition, the agreement supported by the Argentine Association of Radio and Television Broadcasting Stations (ATA) – an entity which represents private operators – will put into effect a rating system for those films scheduled at times outside the child protection time. Thus, at the beginning of every film, an audio and visual warning will be sent which rates the material to be shown.

The films will be rated as follows:

L/ Adult Language: swearing, four letter words and insults.

N/ Nude Scenes: nudity not having to do with love.

V/ Violent Scenes: when blood, horror and destruction are shown.

LVD/ Combined: when the film contains all three elements.

These warnings are not without importance – it has been confirmed by enterprises in charge of estimating audience ratings that children daily watch films at times outside the child protection period.

NEVERTHELESS, this series of apparently voluntary measures is not fortuitous. It is a response to, among other factors, the world-wide boom in the issue media-violence-childhood, the arrival of the V-chip in the USA in 1998 (a device which will allow parents to block those programmes they deem questionable), and to the repercussions – particularly in the press – of the few studies carried out in Argentina which confirm the high degree of violence on the screen.

Other factors we might add are the sanctions and judgements lately passed by the COMFER (a government entity that ensures that rules related to this area are complied with) against various programmes, and a generalised feeling of resentment towards so called 'garbage TV'.

We might wonder if this new regulation will prove effective in modifying a television reality in which viewer-ratings and lack of responsibility prevail, and in which audio-visual products are seen as mere marketing techniques used to sell other products, and not as cultural assets which can and should be at our children's service.

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VIOLENCE IN CHILDREN'S TV PROGRAMMING IN ARGENTINA

During 1994, a quantitative research project was carried out in order to determine the number of scenes of violence shown on children's programmes on open and cable television in Argentina. 534 broadcasts of 47 children's programmes were studied, corresponding to the five open channels in Buenos Aires and two cable signals.

The project, carried out by teachers and students of Quilmes and Buenos Aires National Universities, showed a total of 4,703 violent scenes for the 242 hours observed in the study. Thus, an average of two hours a day in front of the screen, would mean that within a year children could see about 14,200 violent scenes – just watching children's programming.

The research also revealed that:

- violence increases noticeably on Saturdays and Sundays (between 100% and 150%), precisely those days on which children have wider exposure to the screen.
- the hour span with the highest proportion of violent scene content is from 7 to 9 p.m.
- open and cable TV programmes do not differ in their abundance of violent scenes.

Luis A. Albornoz, Universidad de Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA

MEDIASCOPE is a U.S. nonprofit, public policy organization founded in 1992. One of its principal objectives is to encourage accurate and responsible media portrayals without compromising creative freedoms. Mediascope has an extensive collection of resources about media, including, among other things, U.S. Congressional testimony, data on media policy in more than 40 countries, scientific research, news clippings, speeches, statistics and public opinion polls.

Tel: +1 818 508 2080 / 2234, Web site: http://www.mediascope.org

UNICEF Media Activities for Children

MORTEN GIERSING
Director, Division of Communication, UNICEF

In recent years, UNICEF has developed ways of approaching children directly to solicit their opinions and engage them in discussion on development issues. A number of initiatives, outlined below, have involved the participation of children from industrialized and developing countries in meaningful dialogue and activities that enhance their awareness of global issues and increase their capacity to take action in appropriate ways. These initiatives strongly encourage child participation and challenge children to take an active part in exploring and discussing issues that affect their future.

IN 1995, the *Voices of Youth* (VOY) site on the World Wide Web was launched at the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) in Copenhagen, where it was an immediate success. It introduces children to child rights issues, and encourages them to express their views. Children from all over the world responded to the invitation to come forward with questions for government delegates attending the Summit.

After the Summit, we decided to continue VOY as a worldwide forum for children to express their views and dialogue on issues of development, peace and justice, and in particular those issues affecting their own lives. VOY is a good example of how today's technology can be used to bring young people together in a meaningful dialogue about issues that concern them. Indeed, the VOY website has just been chosen as one of "Seven Super Sites of the Month" by Kids' Space, a children's web magazine with readers in 124 countries, which chooses web sites that inspire children to learn and discover the world. For further information, contact Voices of Youth online at **voy@unicef.org** or **Web site – http://www.unicef.org/voy**

MY CITY is an interactive animated CD-ROM game jointly funded by UNICEF and the Canadian government. The players, who become mayors of their city for a day, encounter a series of social and cultural issues based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As mayors, they must decide how to respond to each of these issues. They are given a budget at the start of their tenure, and a popularity meter indicates the success or otherwise of their policies with the voting public. The aim is for the mayor to stay in office without losing resources and popularity as s/he responds to the issues presented. The game encourages awareness and discussion of problems encountered by youth around the world, and encourages them to act on similar problems in their own communities.

PARTICIPATION in the *International Children's Day of Broadcasting* has grown from around 50 broadcasters in 1992 to over 2,000 in 1996. More remarkable than the numbers however, is the extent to which broadcasters throughout the world have become involved in the Day, and have taken its message to heart. An increasing number of broadcasters are devoting an entire day or week to children. Many participating broadcasters have trained children to produce their own programmes, and make documentaries on violations of children's rights.

Another interesting aspect of the Day is the selection of a theme of special concern each year. Through last year's theme of violence in the media, we were able to draw attention to the International Children's Television Charter, which rejects "gratuitous scenes of violence and sex", and is specifically aligned with the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

1994 saw the creation of a special International Emmy award to honour the broadcaster whose participation in the Day is judged the most outstanding. **This year's day will be celebrated on Sunday, 14 December.** For further information, contact the ICDB website at **www.unicef.org/icdb**

IN NOVEMBER, UNICEF will launch the *Meena Communication Initiative*, a new regional effort whose goal is to change the lives of girls in South Asia, a region where discrimination is rife. The protagonist is Meena, a ten-year-old girl who must overcome a series of obstacles in her quest to exercise her rights. As she does so, the series explores the implications of girls' development for the community as a whole.

The project will take the form of a multi-media package comprising a 12-episode animated film series, a 15-part radio series on the BBC's Urdu, Bengali, Hindi and Nepali World Services, documentaries, comic books, posters, folk media and various other materials. Meena will not only be carried on TV and radio, but the concept will also be integrated into school curricula throughout South Asia, and special kits will be made available to non-profit organizations working on behalf of girls in the region.

IN AFRICA, UNICEF has launched *Sara*, a similar multi-media communication package aimed at providing a role-model for adolescent girls in East and Southern Africa.

The package includes an animated television series, a radio series, comic books, story books, audio cassettes and posters. Sara, the heroine, embarks on a series of adventures and faces important decisions, such as whether or not to stay in school, how to deal with difficult adults, and how to protect herself from the HIV/AIDS virus. The episodes teach girls essential life skills such as effective communication, negotiation and problem-solving. The series will be carried in at least 15 countries in the region.

In the past year, UNICEF also teamed up with the Children's Express, a news service run by children for audiences of all ages, to visit Bangladesh where they filed stories on child labour issues.

The Children's Express members conducted a training workshop with three Bangladeshi children, who subsequently worked as reporters during the project. Together, the group interviewed child rights activists, child labour experts and other children in Dhaka.

The Bangladeshi children returned to New York with the rest of the group to work together on additional stories concerning child labour issues in America, and made media appearances to coincide with the International Children's Day of Broadcasting. The trip was a sequel to the Children's Express/UNICEF visit to Bosnia and Croatia in 1995, which focused on the issue of children affected by armed conflict.

AT LAST YEAR'S WORLD CONGRESS against commercial sexual exploitation of children, one area of concern that was identified is how the media report cases of child abuse and children's issues generally. UNICEF is working with the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) to encourage the media to develop international guidelines and codes of conduct for reporting on children's issues. In a series of consultations with media from all over the world, UNICEF will collaborate with the IFJ and the Committee on the Rights of the Child to prepare and adopt final draft guidelines for media reporting on children's issues.

These are just a few of the planned media and multimedia activities for children.

September 1997

For further information, please contact:
The Division of Communication UNICEF (H-9F)
New York, New York 10017, USA

NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM UNICEF

The Progress of Nations 1997 assesses not only such basic social conditions as health, nutrition, education, and water and sanitation, but also progress and disparity in areas that are more difficult to measure but have a profound impact on children's lives, such as violence against girls and women and special protections for children.

The State of the World's Children 1997 focuses on the controversial and emotional as well as complex and challenging issue of child labour, and asserts that thoughtful and comprehensive attempts at solution must be guided by the best interests of the child and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Unicef Annual Report 1997 covers the work and achivements done by Unicef during 1996.

This and other information can be found on the Unicef **Web site: http://www.unicef.org**

Radio Gune-Yi in Senegal

GUNE-YI, MEANING 'YOUTH' in the Wolof language, is a production team which makes a 50 minute long weekly programme broadcast by children for children. The programme is aired on Senegalese national radio on AM and FM frequencies every Saturday at midday. It is funded by Plan International, has an expatriate advisor, Mimi Brazeau, and ties in with a popular young people's newspaper and Plan's child-sponsorship programme in Senegal. Its raison d'être is that while 60 per cent of the population are children, only 15 per cent of programmes on the radio are child oriented. The team has five core staff and the show costs $70,000 a year.

The programme is recorded in villages around the country. Its format includes news; a guest of the week; "What do you want to know?" feature; "Grandma tell me a story"; "Young Reporter" feature with a child reporting on his or her village; "Did you know" describing issues affecting young people including health and the rights of the child; "Listen, I've got something to say" a young person's message addressed to parents, teachers or politicians; "Have you read?" suggestions on African and other authors. There are also exchanges between young people in Senegal and abroad, debates on controversial issues such as girls' education and child labour, recipes, everyday tips, and jokes.

The programme intends to education by example, through a process of self-discovery and confidence building for children. Promotion of the child is also done through always having girl as well as boy presenters. A female sociologist goes to each venue before the recording and does a socio-economic and cultural survey of the area, to identify the pertinent issues effecting young people.

THERE ARE INDICATIONS that about 500,000 children and as many adults listen every week. The national station gives the programme free airtime, and refers to it as one of its "flagship" projects. The press is supportive, as are phone calls and letters. The production team sees increasing confidence amongst girls, school attendance has increased, and some listeners' clubs have formed spontaneously.

Mary Meyers, development communications consultant, who has completed the first media monitoring survey commissioned by the ICHR (International Centre for Humanitarian Reporting) Radio Partnership as part of its ODA (Britain's Overseas Development Agency) funded Creative Radio Initiative, believes the success of the programme is due to its entertainment value and high quality. "There is no doubt", she concludes, "that Gune-Yi's format and ethos of allowing the young to speak for themselves and to grow in confidence as a result, is a great example for other radio stations in Africa and beyond".

Source: Message on May, 15, 1997, from Gordon M. Adam, Deputy Editor of *Crosslines Global Report, The Independent Newsjournal on Humanitarian Action, Development and World Trends*, to the Creative-Radio Mailing List (radio@xlines.tiac.net).

Children's Express

ROWENA YOUNG
London Bureau Chief, Children's Express

Imagine a youth club whose focus is journalism rather than football. A place where kids are given the chance to tackle issues like: why suicide is the second biggest cause of young deaths or why Ecstasy is something to die for.

Children's Express began life in the back room of a New York City house in 1975. It was the home of Bob Clampitt, a former Wall Street lawyer and business entrepreneur, who believed that what children thought and said *did* matter. First he set up a magazine. But what began as a publication 'by children for children', soon evolved into a news service that provided newspaper columns, articles, radio and television programmes across the U.S.

Since then CE has been nominated for a Pulitzer Price, has won Emmy and Peabody Awards for its television coverage, published five books and held biannual symposia on young people and the media – the organisation has developed an enviable reputation as an objective source of youth views. There are now five bureaux in the U.S: Washington (the Foundation headquarters), New York, Indianapolis, Marquette and Oakland.

HAVING HEARD ABOUT CE, a group of journalists and TV producers ran a pilot scheme in London in August 1994. Notices were put up in schools, and 30 children were selected. The main criterion was enthusiasm. Teen editors from the New York bureau trained the London children and the final product was a double page in *The Guardian*. Stephanie Williams, a journalist of 20 years who helped run the pilot, was overwhelmed by how the young people worked and struck by the fact that they were providing what was lacking in the media: the youth angle – 'by children for everyone'. She started raising money to set up a London bureau. Children's Express UK celebrated its second anniversary in May 1997.

CE reporters and editors research and report stories on subjects of their choice. They also accept commissions from newspapers and magazines. The organisation operates like a news agency by placing its stories in newspapers and magazines. CE's aim is to give young people the power and means to express themselves publicly on vital issues that affect them.

CE targets children aged 8 to 18 from inner city areas, working with them after school, on Saturdays and during the holidays. Younger children, aged 8 to 13, are the reporters, trained by the older children, aged 14 to 18, who also take responsibility for editing and overseeing the editorial activities. Every aspect of the process is tape-recorded. Not only does this mean that the CE programme is open to all, regardless of academic ability, but it also guarantees accuracy and encourages literacy, organisation and writing well. In particular, it reinforces numerous aspects of the National Curriculum. It also increases children's self-confidence, develops curiosity and teaches them responsibility and citizenship. Through CE, kids meet adults that they would normally never meet, discover things are not always what they seem, and find out that if they do not take responsibility no-one else will. They learn to see issues from someone else's point of view and to be persistent and assiduous. They also learn that many people are worse off than they are.

THE LONDON BUREAU'S FIRST BIG SCOOP was published in May 1995 in *The Independent* – an investigation on how easy it is for under-age children to buy Lottery tickets. A few other examples are CE's covering of the Labour Party Conference for Channel Four's 'First Edition' and of the European Youth Parliament in Brussels for *The Observer*. In the last two years, over 195 young people have been trained by CE and further recruitment is planned. CE has worked on over 175 stories and published over 100 articles in the national press. Demand for their pieces is steadily increasing. CE has also participated in seven television and six radio broadcasts, and has spoken at three conferences and covered seven others.

In February 1997, CE opened its first regional bureau, in partnership with the Save the Children Fund, in Newcastle. Here the focus is on a specific community where the children have virtually nothing on offer: no sports or leisure provision, no shops, no entertainment, no youth clubs, a school which is under threat of closing, and children with major literacy problems who are frequently excluded from school and who live in difficult family situations. The pressure from the community and media is huge. Children are literally breaking into the building to be included in the programme.

Our aim is to open a further two bureaux in the UK by the year 2000 and then a further five. In this way it is our intention to improve the future prospects of thousands of children as well as to become Britain's first national news service producing news by young people.

September 1997

For more information, please contact:
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Web site: http://www.ce.org

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER IN THE FUTURE?

If you have not yet registered in the Clearinghouse network, please contact:

Pia Hepsever
Tel: +46 31 773 49 53. Fax: +46 31 773 46 55
E-mail: pia.hepsever@jmg.gu.se

Introducing Media Knowledge in Uruguay

A CASE STUDY was performed during the period 1985 to 1994 when media knowledge was introduced in the Uruguayan schools. The aim of this ethnographic and action research project – based on documents, interviews and unstructured conversations – was to identify factors which create opportunities, limitations and hindrances during the different phases of such an implementation process. During the first stage of the study the focus was on the initiators and the central representatives of the school authority. During the stage of realisation, the focus shifted to the local level: to teachers, children and parents, and to the school authority's local officers. Despite many difficulties during the process, media pedagogy is now part of the activity of "El Consejo de Educación Primaria".

URUGUAY'S POLITICAL SITUATION – the reintroduction of a constitutional government and the desire to reinforce the democratic process in the country – was the factor which triggered off implementation of media knowledge in the school. But, according to the study, it was various combinations of the following factors that were decisive in facilitating and/or hindering the process: the political and economical context; the social significance of education in the country; dedicated persons (persons with strong commitment to the question); attention paid by the press and various groups in society; the legitimacy and status of the initiative; the hierarchy of channels to anchor proposals; financing; actor participation; the struggle for power; institutionalisation.

At the local level, the following factors were significant, as well: the definition of the pedagogical activity; resources; voluntary participation; the need for in-service teacher training; the teachers' images and prior knowledge of mass media; the status of the subject in the school curriculum; the generation gap; cultural collisions between school and leisure.

The study also showed that many situations created during the implementation of media knowledge were not unique to this subject area.

Ana Graviz Machado (1996) *Introducing Media Knowledge in Schools: A Pedagogical Problem? – A Case Study in Uruguay*. Stockholm University, Department of Education

The Jesuit Communication Project

FOUNDED IN 1984, the Toronto based Jesuit Communication Project's major goal is to encourage and promote the development of media education. The JCP offers workshops and courses on a variety of media related topics for teachers, parents, and others interested in the impact of the media. The resource centre at the JCP has over three thousand books and periodicals on the media. Media education teaching materials from around the world as well as files of clippings on various media topics are also available for those wishing to do research.

Over the years, the JCP has co-authored material on media education including the *Media Literacy: A Resource Guide* for the government of Ontario and the text *Meet the Media*. The JCP recently developed the award winning *Scanning Television*, an educational kit consisting of four hours of television excerpts with a study guide. The topics dealt with include Media and Representation, Selling Images and Values, Media Environments, the Global Citizen, and New Technologies.

THE JCP HAS WORKED with many media education groups and media professionals around the world on topics ranging from media violence to new technology. These groups include the National Film Board of Canada, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, YTV, and TVOntario. Currently the JCP is serving as a consultant to CHUM Television, the Alliance for Children and Television, Cable in the Classroom and Warner Brothers Entertainment Inc. The JCP is developing *Scanning the Movies*, a series of half hour television programs for teachers dealing with media education and approaching current movies. Study guides for the movies discussed will be available on the Internet.

Twice a year the JCP publishes *Clipboard* a newsletter about media education activities around the world. Subscriptions are $15 a year.

For further information please contact:
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E-mail: pungente@chass.utoronto.ca
Web site: http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/FA/JCPHomePage

THE MEDIA AWARENESS NETWORK, based in Canada, offers practical support for media education in the home, school and community and provides information on media culture. It is also a place where educators, parents, students and community workers can share resources and explore ways to make media a more positive force in children's lives.
Web site: http://www.screen.com/mnet

The charter below was adopted by the The Southern African Developing Countries' Summit on Children and Broadcasting, held on May 31, 1996, in Johannesburg, South Africa.

SADC CHILDREN'S BROADCASTING CHARTER

We, the people of the Southern African Developing Countries of Angola, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland and Zambia, affirm and accept the internationally adopted Children's Television Charter which was accepted in Munich on 29 May, 1995.

Without detracting from the International Children's Charter, we further adopt, in line with the said Charter, our SADC Children's Broadcasting Charter, which takes into account the needs and wants of children in our region.

Children should have programmes of high quality, made specially for them and which do not exploit them. These programmes, in addition to entertaining, should allow children to develop physically, mentally and socially to their fullest potential. Whilst endorsing the child's right to freedom of expression, thought, conscience and religion, and protection against economic exploitation, children must be assured access to programmes and production of programmes through multi-media access centres.

Children should hear, see and express themselves, their culture, their language and their life experiences, through the electronic media which affirm their sense of self, community and place.

As part of the child's right to education and development, children's programmes should promote an awareness and appreciation of other cultures in parallel with the child's own cultural background. To facilitate this there should be an ongoing research into the child audience, including the child's needs and wants which, as a matter of priority, should be implemented.

Children's programmes should be wide-ranging in genre and content, but should not include gratuitous scenes of violence and sex.

Children's programmes should be aired in regular slots at times when children are available to listen and view, and/or be distributed via other widely accessible media or technologies.

Sufficient resources, technical, financial and other must be made available to make these programmes to the highest possible standards, and in order to achieve quality, codes and standards for children's broadcasting must be formulated and developed through a diverse range of groupings.

In compliance with the UN policy of co-operation between states in the international community, and especially in the SADC countries, the Children's Broadcasting Charter recognises all international covenants, conventions, treaties, charters and agreements adopted by all international organisations including the UN and the OAU affecting children, but with particular reference to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The All African Summit

THE FIRST All African Summit on Children's Broadcasting – held in Accra, Ghana, on October 8-12, 1997 – was a success. The most important thing that came out of the Summit was an Africa Charter on Children's Broadcasting. The Charter is in keeping with the international Children's Television Charter, but expands on the issues relevant to the African continent, and includes radio as well. In particular greater emphasis was placed on the educational and developmental needs of our children and protection from all forms of commercial exploitation.

As a continent, there was great enthusiasm about forming partnerships and collaborating on certain programmes. However, the reality for most broadcasters is the lack of technology, infrastructure, funds and skills. The challenge for Africa is primarily about basic services, so children's broadcasting is often overlooked for real needs (water, electrification, housing, etc.).

The Africa Summit was also attended by child delegates from Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia and South Africa. The Summit recommended that the Second World Summit (in March 1998, London) include some discussion on radio as it is the primary medium used in the developing world.

The Africa Charter on Children's Broadcasting is still (October 1997) in draft form but will be available shortly.

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Young Media Australia

THE IMPACT OF VIOLENCE in the media on children and young people has been a key issue for the vocal Young Media Australia group for more than 40 years.

Young Media Australia (YMA) is the business and trading name of the Australian Council for Children's Films and Television. It is a national, non-profit, community based organisation, led by executive director Barbara Biggins. YMA provides information, advocacy and research on the impact of media on children and young people. Its membership includes Australian national and state children's interest organisations, local community groups and individuals. YMA's regular news digest, *Small Screen*, is Australia's only news review of developments in children's media and is sent to individuals and groups throughout the world.

Young Media Australia:

- Promotes the provision of quality media products for children, especially those made in Australia;
- Is an authoritative source of children's media information;
- Provides education materials for parents and professionals on children's media issues;
- Fosters informed public opinion and debate on children's media issues;
- Promotes media awareness by the young and their caregivers;
- Has a co-operative relationship with other children's interests organisations; and
- Advocates on children's media issues.

YMA PROVIDES RESEARCH and information on issues such as violence on TV, videos, films, video and computer games; advertising directed at children; and the social health impact of mass media in Australia. These materials are updated and upgraded constantly. The centre also publishes a range of resource kits, pamphlets and other publications, and stocks consumer material from more than 20 regulatory agencies.

On the basis of research, YMA has strongly advocated for the rights of the developing child to be protected from problematic forms of violent media and for more effective regulation in this regard. Our efforts in this area of community concern were recognised by an award in the 1995 National Violence Prevention Awards.

More information supplied by:
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Web site: http://www.nanou.com.au/yma

Stop Violence in TV Programmes!

A PANEL DISCUSSION on screen violence was held under the above heading on September 24, 1997, during the 14th International PRIX DANUBE Festival of Programmes for Children and Youth in Bratislava (September 21-27). The biannual festival is organised by Slovak Television (STV), and this time OTF (Television Factory Orava) was the major sponsor. For more than twenty-five years, creators, authors, producers and other professionals from all over the world have met here to promote good programming. Researchers, media and parent organisations, and viewers were also invited to the discussion on violence.

Screen violence became a topical and acute problem in the former east-block European countries when censorship ceased, and because of the enormous flow of Western imports. The solutions suggested in the discussion were wide-ranging and dealt with legislation, self-regulation (e.g., programme ratings, advisory boards), alternative quality TV production, the role of the school, family, church and adults generally, the pressure of public opinion, kind of society, and, not least, child participation in media production.

Proceedings will be published. *For more information please contact:*
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JAPAN PRIZE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM CONTEST

The world's best educational programming will be competing at the 24th Japan Prize, this year held at NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) in Tokyo, November 20-28.

Annually over 100 organizations from around the world enter more than 150 programs in the only international television contest devoted exclusively to educational programs. NHK also encourages educational broadcasting professionals to participate in the Contest as observers.

For further information please contact:
The Japan Prize Secretariat
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E-mail: japan-prize@media.nhk.or.jp
Web site: http://www.nhk.or.jp/jp-prize/

Daily Violence and Media Violence

How Do Children Manage It?

ELISABETH AUCLAIRE
Chair of GRREM

These days, one hears a lot about violence. But what does it mean exactly? "Violence: brutal force to subjugate someone...crimes, brutality, ire, wrath, force, rape..." These words as well as the qualifiers which are used for them describe various types of violence and, thus, if one speaks of violence and the media the following spectrum is covered: the representation of violent acts; scenes of violence expressing diverse images; violence imposed through aggressiveness of sound, editing etc...

Let us attempt to look at things with some serenity instead of using our subjective presuppositions which lead us to think that the media "does something to the children". Let us use the children themselves as a departure point. Let us wonder what children actually do with media, how they truly use them, and what is their real place in their development process. The stakes are high: they are eminently cultural as we are also addressing the future of our societies which are increasingly being taken hostage by a multitude of information networks which criss-cross one other in a seemingly never-ending fashion, accessible but to a limited number.

Chroniques du Forum No. 5 (12 p), published by GRREM in August 1997 with the support of France Télévision, contains excerpts from opening speeches and summarising reports of the international Forum mentioned in the article, as well as perspectives and initiatives for the future.

One hears a lot about violence in video games and on the television and movie screens but what about the violence which children, both youngsters and teenagers, suffer at the hands of the adults? The very fact that the screen, whether it be the television or the computer, has become the chosen haven against loneliness and daily violence in its many forms should make us think long and hard. Poverty, unemployment, both actual and foreseeable, conditions of life which are borderline unbearable for millions of children around the world, children abused both physically and psychologically, children torn between parents who use them as pawns to settle their own disputes, street children and those totally excluded from society, all these rampant aggressions are part of the children's world today.

THE REAL QUESTION IS THE FOLLOWING: what society are we preparing for the generations to come? A society where the key words, or worse yet, the magic words, have become "the market", money, daily warfare, or are we creating a universe of human beings, of citizens of one country, one continent and the same world? Which of these two worlds are we drafting? Is the International Convention on the Rights of the Child taken into account and more particularly those articles which are the responsibility of the media? Has the Convention simply become a pretext for flowery speeches and unapplied texts?

The child is a human being, both individual and unique. Each child has his or her own history. Thus, each child establishes with the media an individual rapport. Children ask questions and, among those, they make queries about their relationship with the different forms of media. Adults do not always have answers but may choose to explore different paths as long as their children accept them as partners. Media professionals share in this responsibility, with all the other actors of the education field. Researchers and professionals who deal with children in their everyday work may contribute to better understand the phenomena which operate at every stage of a child's life. Is the best response to life's dangers over protection or access to information which, no demagogy intended, help children build indispensable milestones.

When examining children closely, the responsibility of the different players in the relationship between media and children makes the presence of adults necessary. Rather than making media, from radio to Internet, responsible for our own lacunae, let us turn our attention to our own adult reactions to the media and to the care, or lack thereof, which we give to the questions raised by children about their own interaction with the diverse forms of media.

THIS IS what some 350 specialists and professionals gathered at the International Forum of Researchers Working on the Relationship between Children and the Media, initiated by the "Groupe de Recherche sur la Relation Enfants/Médias" (GRREM), in cooperation with UNESCO, attempted to address in Paris in April 1997. Other encounters of this kind will be organised in the near future.

Let me conclude by venturing one last comment: scapegoats, be it the media or other types, have never been the answer to societal problems. Our own adult thoughts should be directed at the reasons why we elaborate complex criteria to justify watching all kinds of television programmes in the comfort and intimacy of our homes. But, then, that is an entirely different story.

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NEW NAME – International Research Forum (IRF) on Television and Children, initiated by the Australian Broadcasting Authority, has changed its name to reflect the broader research interests of the members. The name is now: International Research Forum on Children and Media – **IRFCAM.**

The International Children's Day of Broadcasting

Sunday, December 14, 1997

Tune in to kids! More than 2,000 broadcasters in over 170 countries will give children a chance to play their part in TV and radio on the International Children's Day of Broadcasting.

In addition, UNICEF in conjunction with partners such as Danmarks Radio, PRIX JEUNESSE and Television Trust for the Environment will provide free or low cost programming for use on the 1997 Day. These programmes include short stories for and about kids, documentaries, music videos and PSA's. They are available in English, French, and Spanish (where applicable). A catalogue listing and describing all programmes for the Day is on offer.

For more information, please contact:
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Web site: http://www.unicef.org/icdb/indjs.html

The Second World Summit on Television for Children

London, UK, March 9-13, 1998

The Summit will be hosted jointly by the BBC, Channel 4, ITV and Nickelodeon UK. The organisation committee is chaired by Anna Home, Head of Children's Programmes at the BBC. To ensure that the Summit's international aspirations and concerns are truly reflected, the organising committee is supported by four advisory boards worldwide.

Over 70 speakers from all over the world will participate in the Summit and 1,000 leading broadcasters, producers, writers, politicians, regulators, teachers, academics and children are expected to attend.

Some of the aims of the Summit are:

- Build on the achievements of the 1995 Melbourne Summit;
- Raise the political profile of children's television, debating the key creative, political and financial issues;
- Support children's programme makers in developed and developing countries;
- Enable children from different world cultures to be seen and heard at the major debates;
- Assess the impact of the Children's Charter since 1995 and evaluate its application;
- Develop an ongoing Summit movement which will take the crucial issues in children's television forward into the next millenium.

For more information please contact:
The Second World Summit on Television for Children
c/o The Event Organisation Company
8 Cotswold Mews, Battersea Square, London SW11 3RA, UK
Tel: +44 171 228 8034, Fax: +44 171 924 1790
E-mail: eventorg@event-org.com / Web site: www.event-org.com

European Conference – The Children's Creativity Builds the Future

Stockholm, Sweden, March 11-13, 1998

Children's Creativity Builds the Future will, with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a base, focus on the importance of Children's Rights to develop their own creativity and their access to cultural life and cultural practice. The following themes will be in focus:

- Children's democratic access to cultural means of expression and to cultural heritage;
- A holistic approach to education with emphasis on the stimulation of creativity, the acquisition of interpersonal skills and the capacity to be flexible in applying knowledge;
- Children's and young people's space for play and leisure with the main focus on the urban environment;
- Media, pluralism and freedom of expression.

Children's Creativity Builds the Future is linked to the 1996 Copenhagen Conference Forum on Children's Culture. Culture for children and young people will also be part of the agenda at the UNESCO Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development in Stockholm, March 30 – April 2, 1998.

Children's Creativity Builds the Future is intended for decision-makers, researchers, practitioners, educationalists and professional instructors. The conference will include plenary sessions with key-note speakers as well as sessions in smaller groups. Meetings with children and young people involved in cultural activities are also included.

For further information and registration contact:
Children's Creativity Builds the Future
Stockholm Convention Bureau
P.O. Box 6911, S-102 39 Stockholm, SWEDEN
Fax: +46 8 34 84 41

Youth and the Global Media

Manchester, UK, April 1-2, 1998

Media professionals, academics and students of media are invited to an International Broadcasting Symposium, organised by the University of Manchester in association with John Libbey Media.

The objectives of 'Youth and the Global Media' are to provide a stimulating programme of speakers and a meeting place where media professionals and academics can discuss topics of current concern in broadcasting.

Speakers will include: David Elstein, Chief Executive, Channel 5; Georgina Henry, Deputy Editor, The Guardian; Annette Hill, Roehampton Institute London; David Gauntlett, University of Leeds.

For further information contact:
Dr Sue Ralph, School of Education
University of Manchester
Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, UK.
Tel: +44 161 275 3398, Fax: +44 161 275 3398
E-mail: ralph@fsl.ed.man.ac.uk

II World Meeting on Media Education

Sao Paulo, Brazil, May, 18-19, 1998, and

International Congress on Communication and Education:

Multimedia & Education in a Global World: At the 50th Year of Human Rights Declaration

Sao Paulo, Brazil, May, 20-24, 1998

The World Meeting is held prior to the Congress. Roberto Aparici (Spain) is currently coordinating the meeting with the directors of the World Council on Media Education (WCME).

The International Congress is for researchers and specialists in communication and education; governmental authorities in the field of education; directors and producers of radio and television; multimedia producers; media professionals; and teachers in primary, secondary and institutions of higher education.

Objectives of the Congress:

1. To evaluate international media education programs and projects from ethical, technological and pedagogical perspectives;
2. To examine international experiences in the use of communication resources to improve education through the exercise of freedom of expression and the practice of citizenship;
3. To offer workshops to media educators within the context of democratic citizenship, freedom of expression and human rights;
4. To create a dialogue about the political and commercial practices that can bridge media, information technologies, and education in the first decade of the 21st century.

For more information, please contact:

World Council of Media Education (WCME) Directors:
Roberto Aparici, Spain, Fax: +34 1 398 6699/ 553 343 48, E-mail: raparici@sr.uned.es – Ismar de Oliveira Soares, Brazil, Fax: +55 11 818 4326, E-mail: ismar@usp.br – Robyn Quin, Australia, Fax: +61 9 381 8887, E-mail: r.quin@cowan.edu.au – Kathleen Tyner, USA, Fax: +1 415 642 0270, E-mail: medialit@sirius.com – Andrew Hart, UK, E-mail: A.P.Hart@soton.ac.uk

Conference Coordinators in Brazil:
Ismar de Oliveira and Angelo Piovesan, Fax: +55 11 818 4326. E-mail: ismar@usp.br – and Nelly de Camargo, Cécilia Marques, Lina Gottlieb, Cristina Costa and María P. Palhares.

PRIX JEUNESSE International

Munich, Germany, June 4-10, 1998

PRIX JEUNESSE International Festival, held every even-numbered year, honors and promotes high-quality television programs for children and young people. For 1998, special efforts have been made to welcome works from the growing world of independent producers, thereby acknowledging their creative contributions to children's television. Independent producers are private production groups who are not necessarily broadcasters and who do not broadcast the programmes they produce.

For further information, please contact:
PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL
Ursula von Zallinger, Secretary General or
Kirsten Schneid, Personal Assistant to the Secretary General
c/o Bayerischer Rundfunk
Rundfunkplatz 1, D - 80300 München, GERMANY
Tel: +49 89 5900 2058, Fax: +49 89 5900 3053

Media Education Research Section of IAMCR

Glasgow, Scotland, July, 26-30, 1998

Call for papers

The following sessions will be held at the IAMCR Conference in Glasgow:

- Current research in media education;
- From "traditional" media education to media education including interactive media/multimedia (research projects and development work);
- Curriculum – state of the art in various countries.

Deadline for abstracts, between 300-400 words to be sent by regular or e-mail, is February 1, 1998. All completed papers must be received by June 1, 1998.

Please send abstracts and papers to:
Dr. Birgitte Tufte
Ass. Professor
The Royal Danish School of Educational Studies
Emdrupvej 54, 2400 Copenhagen NV, DENMARK
Tel: +45 39 69 66 33. Fax +45 39 66 00 63
E-mail: tufte@dlh1.dlh.dk

MEDIA EDUCATION PAPERS PRESENTED AT THE IAMCR CONFERENCE IN OAXACA, MEXICO, JULY 1997

The following papers were presented in the Media Education Research Section of IAMCR, in Oaxaca, Mexico, July 3-6, 1997.

Session 1

Antonieta Rebeil, Mexico: *New Technologies and Education in Mexico: an Overview*

Cecilia Porras Marceles, Mexico: *Whom to Educate for the Media?*

Samuel Roberto Gómez Valencia, Mexico: *Teacher's Opinion on the Educational Capacity of TV Encounters and Cultural Visions in Conflict*

Sergio Inestrosa, Mexico: *Commercial TV in the Classroom. Uses and Applications: a Proposal for Primary Education*

Session 2

Bruno Olivier, France: *Representations in Education and the Media: from Invisibility to Confrontation*

Emilio Garcia and Rafael Acevedo, Mexico: *A Teaching-Learning Model with Multimedia Resources*

Niels Kryger, Denmark: *Aesthetic Learning and Sound Media Production in School*

The papers represented "traditional" media education – from a didactic and cultural point of view – as well as examples of research within the computerbased media. The discussion about the role of multimedia in relation to the more "traditional" media will be further developed in Glasgow (see above).

THANK YOU FOR SENDING PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION!

Listed below is a selection of materials which have been sent to the Clearinghouse, but are not mentioned in any other context.

We will in future issues of the newsletter continue to publish references to recent books, articles, reports and other materials, including those sent to the Clearinghouse.

Altrogge, Michael; Amann, Rolf: *Videoclips : Secret Seducers of the Young?* Berlin, Germany, Die Landesmedienanstalten, VISTAS Verlag GmbH, 1991, 320 p, ISBN 3-89158-068-1.

Arnaldo, Carlos A: *Youth and Communication : UN World Conference on Youth.* Paris, France, UNESCO, 1996, 16 p, (UN Conference, Vienna, November 1996).

Arnaldo, Carlos A; Bennett, John: *Children, the Media and the Rights of the Child.* Paris, France, UNESCO, 1996, 16 p.

The Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media : Draft Report. Manila, The Republic of the Philippines, Asian-Pacific Broadcasting Union, Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre (1997), 44 p, (The Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media, In the Best Interests of All Children, Manila, July 1996).

Australian Children's Television. Sydney, Australia, Australian Broadcasting Authority, 1997, 36 p.

Audience Research Relevant to the Issue of Violence. Sydney, Australia, Australian Broadcasting Authority, 1996, 11 p.

Bazalgette, Cary; Bevort, Evelyne; Gonnet, Jacques: *New Directions in Media Education.* London, United Kingdom, British Film Institute, November 1990, 5 p, *(Colloquy Report, Toulouse, France, July 1990).*

ben-Arieh, Asher, (Ed): *The State of the Child in Israel : A Statistical Abstract 1994.* Jerusalem, Israel, The National Council for the Child, The Center for Research and Public Education, 1995, 336 p.

Boe, Susanne, (Ed): *Medievold : Born og Unge (Media Violence : Children and Young People).* Copenhagen, Denmark, Kulturministeriet, 1995, 78 p, (in Danish).

Büttner, Christian; von Gottberg, Joachim: *Jugendschutz und Fernsehen in Europa : Grenzenlose Fernsehgewalt?* Frankfurt am Main, Germany, Hessische Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung, 1995, 37 p, ISBN 3-928965-59-X, (HSFK Report 7).

Büttner, Christian; von Gottberg, Joachim: *Television and the Protection of Young People in Europe : TV Violence without Frontiers?* Frankfurt am Main, Germany, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, 1995, 40 p, ISBN 3-928965-60-3, (PRIF Reports No 39).

Chen, Milton: *The Smart Parent's Guide to Kid's TV.* San Francisco, USA, Center for Education and Lifelong Learning, 1996, 210 p, ISBN 0-912333-47-2.

Cupit, C Glenn: *Kids and the Scary World of Video.* Adelaide, South Australia, The Television Committee of the South Australian Council for Children's Film & Television Inc , 1986, 200 p.

Docherty, David: *Public Opinion and Broadcasting Standards : Violence in Television Fiction.* London, United Kingdom, John Libbey & Company Ltd, 1990, 34 p, ISBN 0-86196-284-2, (Broadcasting Standards Council, Annual Review 1990).

Das Fernsehen im Alltag von Kindern : Informationen für die Medienerziehung in Kindergarten und Grundschule. Düsseldorf, Germany, Landesanstalt für Rundfunk Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1990, 158 p, (LfR-Workshop, Münster, Oktober, 1990), (LfR-Dokumentationen Band 6).

Film Censorship in Sweden. Stockholm, Sweden, The National Board of Film Censors, 12 p, (in English and Swedish).

Gewalt im Fernsehen : (K)ein Thema für Kindergarten und Schule? Düsseldorf, Germany, Landesanstalt für Rundfunk Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1993, 148 p, (LfR-Workshop, Dortmund, February, 1992), (LfR-Dokumentationen Band 8).

Gewalt und Horror in den Medien : Unterrichtsmaterialien zur Medienerziehung. Wien, Austria, Bundesministerium für Unterricht und Kunst, 1992, 76 p.

Groebel, Jo; Gleich, Uli: *Gewaltprofil des deutschen Fernsehprogrammes : Eine Analyse des Angebots privater und öffentlich-rechtlicher Sender.* Opladen, Germany, Leske+Budrich, 1993, 174 p, ISBN 3-8100-1093-6, (Schriftenreihe Medienforschung der Landesanstalt für Rundfunk Nordrhein-Westfalen, 6).

Halloran, James D: Mass Media and Violence pp 571-575. In: Bluglass, R E; Bowden, P (Eds): *Principles and Practice of Forensic Psychiatry.* Edinburg, United Kingdom, Churchill Livingstone, 1990, ISBN 0-443-03578-4.

Halloran, James D; Gray, Peggy: Television in the Family. pp 103-195. In: *Broadcasting Standards Council : Young People and the Media.* London, United Kingdom, Broadcasting Standards Council, 1996, 210 p, (Research Working Paper No 13).

Hargrave, Andrea Millwood (Ed): *Violence in Factual Television.* London, United Kingdom, John Libbey & Company Ltd, 1993, 150 p, ISBN 0-86196-441-1, (Broadcasting Standards Council, Annual Review 1993).

Hargrave, Andrea Millwood: Teenagers. pp 26-79. In: *Broadcasting Standards Council : Young People and the Media.* London, United Kingdom, Broadcasting Standards Council, 1996, 210 p, (Research Working Paper No 13).

Hurrelmann, Bettina; Hammer, Michael; Stelberg, Klaus: *Familienmitglied Fernsehen : Fernsehgebrauch und Probleme der Fernseherziehung in verschiedenen Familienformen.* Opladen, Germany, Leske+Budrich, 1996, 308 p, ISBN 3-8100-1434-6, (Schriftenreihe Medienforschung der Landesanstalt für Rundfunk Nordrhein-Westfalen, 20).

Höijer, Birgitta; Anden-Papadopoulus, Kari (Eds): *Våldsamma nyheter : perspektiv på dokumentära våldsskildringar i media.* (Violent News : Perspectives on Documentary Descriptions of Violence in Media). Stockholm, Sweden, Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposium, 1996, 238 p, ISBN 91-7139-274-2.

Höijer, Birgitta: *The Depiction of Violence on Television News : Conceptualizations and Reactions among News Professionals and Audiences.* 20 p, (The International Conference on Violence in the Media - Prospects for Change, October, 1994, New York, USA). Also in: Våldsskildringsrådet, 1994, (No 9), (in Swedish).

Höijer, Birgitta: The Dilemmas of Documentary Violence in Television. In: *The Nordicom Review,* 1996, No 2, pp 53-61.

Lealand, Geoff: *Television and New Zealand Preschoolers : A Longitudal Study.* Waikato, New Zealand, University of Waikato, Department of Film & Television Studies, 1995, 76 p.

Linné, Olga: *Children and the Media : An Inventory of the State of the Art of European Research and Teaching.* Leicester, United Kingdom, University of Leicester, Centre for Mass Communication Research, 1996, 95 p.

Medienerziehung im Kindergarten : Neue Herausforderungen durch private Programme? Düsseldorf, Germany, Landesanstalt für Rundfunk Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1990, 158 p, (LfR-Workshop, September, 1989) (LfR-Dokumentationen Band 3).

Medien Impulse : Beiträge zur Medienpädagogik. Wien, Austria, Bundesministerium für Unterricht und Kunst, 1993, No 2.

Medien ohne Grenzen : Brauchen wir einen europäischen Jugendschutz? Hessische Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung, Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle Fernsehen, Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle der Filmwirtschaft, Bundesprüfstelle für Jugendgefährdende Schriften , 1996, 96 p, (Dokumentation der Tagung vom Juli 1996 im Kurhaus Wiesbaden).

Medienpädagogik : Text- und Materialiensammlung. Baden-Baden, Germany, Südwestfunks Fernsehen, Baden-Baden und der Landesanstalt für Kommunikation Baden-Württenberg, 1997, CD-ROM.

Norsk Lov om Film og Videogram (Norwegian National Law on Film and Video), Oslo, Norway, Statens Filmtilsyn, May, 1987, (in Norwegian).

Pecora, Norma; Fox, Kathleen: *Best Intentions Gone Awry : Regulatory Impact on Local Children's Programming.* Athens, USA, School of Telecommunications, 1997, 23 p, (A paper submitted to the Management Division Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, April 1997).

Roe, Keith; Muijs, Daniel: *Literacy in the Media Age : Results from the Second Wave of a Longitudinal Study of Children's Media Use and Educational Achievement*. Leuven, Belgium, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Department of Communication, 1997, 78 p. (Report No 2).

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Roe, Keith; Muijs, Daniel: Media Use and Literacy in Childhood : A Theoretical and Empirical Reappraisal, pp 81-98. In: Carlsson, Ulla (Ed): *Beyond Media Uses and Effects*. Göteborg, Sweden, NORDICOM, 1997, 147 p.

Schorb, Bernd; Anfang, Günter: *Was machen 'Airwolf' und 'Knightrider' mit ihrer jugendlichen Zuschauern?* München, Germany, Institut Jugend Film Fernsehen, 1991, 90 p.

Selg, Herbert: Gewalt in Medien : Möglichkeiten von Eltern zur Vermeidung negativer Auswirkungen. In: *Kindheit und Entwicklung*, 1997, No 6, pp 79-83.

Sharon, Donna: *Countering Violence in Families and Communities : Schools' Initiatives and the Role of Educational Television*. Toronto, Canada, TVOntario, 1991, 49 p. (Planning and Development Research, Report 91-3).

Skolbiokatalogen 1997-98 (School Movie Catalogue 1997-98). Stockholm, Sweden, Svenska Filminstitutet, 1997, 63 p. (in Swedish).

The Smart Parent's Guide to TV Violence. San Francisco, USA, Center for Education and Lifelong Learning, 1996, Video, 60 min.

Valkenburg, Patti M; Beentjes, Johannes W J: Children's Creative Imagination in Response to Radio and Television Stories. *Journal of Communication*, Vol 47, 1997, No 2, pp 21-38, ISSN 0021-9916.

Valkenburg, Patti M; van der Voort, Tom H A: Influence of TV on Daydreaming and Creative Imagination : A Review of Research. In: *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol 116, 1994, No 2, pp 316-339.

Valkenburg, Patti M; van der Voort, Tom H A: The Influence of Television on Children's Daydreaming Styles : A 1-Year Panel Study. In: *Communication Research*, Vol 22, 1995, No 3, pp 267-287.

Violence Code and CBC-TV re Mighty Morphin Power Rangers. Ottawa, Canada, Canadian Broadcast Standards Council, 1994, (CBSC decision 93/94-0270 and 0277, Oct. 1994).

World Summit on Television and Children: Final Report. Carlton, Australia, The Australian Children's Television Foundation, 1995, 68 p. ISBN: 0-86421-105-8. (World Summit on Television and Children, Melbourne, Australia, March 1995).

van der Voort, Tom H A; Valkenburg, Patti M: Television's Impact on Fantasy Play : A Review of Research. In: *Developmental Review*, 1994, No 14, pp 27-51.

We also thank the following organizations for sending newsletters and other information.

Australian Broadcasting Authority, Sydney, Australia.

Australian Children's Television Action Committee, Carlton, Australia.

The Australian Children's Television Foundation, Fitzroy, Australia.

Broadcasting Standards Council, London, UK.

Canadian Broadcast Standards Council, Ottawa, Canada.

Center for Education and Lifelong Learning – KQED, San Francisco, USA.

Child Rights Information Network – CRIN, London, UK.

International Centre of Films for Children and Young People – CIFEJ, Montreal, Canada.

Coalition for Quality Children's Media – CQCM, Santa Fe, USA.

European Children's Television Centre – E.C.T.C., Athens, Greece.

Group de Recherche sur la Relation Enfants/Médias – GRREM, Paris, France.

Internationales Zentralinstitut für das Jugend- und Bildungsfernsehen – IZI, Bayerischer Rundfunk, Munich, Germany.

International Research Forum on Children and Media – IRCAM, Australian Broadcasting Authority, Sydney, Australia.

Kuleana – Center for Children's Rights, Mwanza, Tanzania.

Landslaget for Mediaundervisning, Oslo, Norway.

Münchner Gesellschaft für Kabel-Kommunikation mbH (MGK), München, Germany.

Young Media Australia, Adelaide, South Australia.

Vildsinskildringsrådet, Stockholm, Sweden.

The World Alliance of Television for Children – WATCH, Bayerischer Rundfunk, Munich, Germany.

THE CLEARINGHOUSE

We welcome researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organisations and interested individuals to the Clearinghouse information network. As a participant you will receive our publications (in English) with the contributions of other network participants from all parts of the globe. (Participation is free of charge.)

The value of the Clearinghouse as a forum rests in the breadth of its coverage and the commitment of its participants. In short: the more relevant information we gather, and the more who contribute from all continents, the better our services.

We are interested in research related to children, young people and media violence, and in documentation of measures, activities and alternatives of relevance to this field.

News briefs and short articles to our newsletter, *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, will be greatly valued, as will notices of coming and recent conferences, seminars and other events; of new publications; and of active associations and organisations with children and media in view.

We are also grateful for receiving relevant publications and materials — if possible, two copies of each, please! They will successively be informed of in the newsletters, and be documented at the Clearinghouse into a growing knowledge base for overviews, compilations and bibliographies of interest to various groups of users.

As for publications and materials in other languages than English, French, German and Spanish, we kindly ask you for complementary translations of the titles.

We look forward to hearing from you, not least regarding any requests or suggestions you may have concerning Clearinghouse services. And we hope that you will come to appreciate our efforts — as a means of making your own work known in wider circles, and as a way to keep abreast of others' work.

VISIT THE CLEARINGHOUSE ON THE WEB

You can find us on Nordicom´s web site at http://www.nordicom.gu.se

The site is still under construction. We hope to have the newsletter on line in early 1998.

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The Clearinghouse is to contribute to and effectively knowledge on children, young people and media violence, seen in the perspective of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Göteborg University

Nordic Council of Ministers

NORDICOM
Nordic Information Center for Media and Communication Research

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News on Children and Violence on the Screen

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A newsletter from

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

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THE CLEARINGHOUSE IS LOCATED AT NORDICOM

NORDICOM is an organ of co-operation between the Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The overriding goal and purpose is to make the media and communication efforts undertaken in the Nordic countries known, both throughout and far beyond our part of the world.

NORDICOM uses a variety of channels – newsletters, journals, books, databases – to reach researchers, students, decision-makers, media practitioners, journalists, teachers and interested members of the general public.

NORDICOM works to establish and strengthen links between the Nordic research community and colleagues in all parts of the world, both by means of unilateral flows and by linking individual researchers, research groups and institutions.

NORDICOM also documents media trends in the Nordic countries. The joint Nordic information addresses users in Europe and further afield. The production of comparative media statistics forms the core of this service.

NORDICOM is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

The Nordic Information Center for Media and Communication Research (Nordicom) has set up an international clearinghouse on children and violence on the screen. The Clearinghouse receives financial support from the Government of Sweden and UNESCO.

The Clearinghouse is to contribute to and effectivize knowledge on children, young people and media violence, seen in the perspective of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The prime task is to make new knowledge and data known to prospective users all over the world.

The International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen informs various groups of users – about

- research findings concerning children, young people and media violence,
- ongoing research on children and media violence,
- children's access to mass media and their media use,
- training and courses of study on children and the media,
- positive alternatives to media violence, and
- measures and activities which aim to limit gratuitous violence on television, in films, and in interactive media.

The object of the Clearinghouse is three-fold: to attract attention to the question of violence on the screen and its role in the lives of children and young people, to stimulate initiatives and activities to combat gratuitous violence, and to help provide a better basis for policy in the field.

The Clearinghouse is user-oriented, which means that our services are offered in response to demand and are adapted to the needs of our clients.

The Clearinghouse publishes a newsletter and a yearbook.

We welcome researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organisations and interested individuals to the Clearinghouse information network. As a participant you will receive our publications (in English) with the contributions of other network participants from all parts of the globe. (Participation is free of charge.)

The value of the Clearinghouse as a forum rests in the breadth of its coverage and the commitment of its participants. In short: the more relevant information we gather, and the more who contribute from all continents, the better our services.

We are interested in research related to children, young people and media violence, and in documentation of measures, activities and alternatives of relevance to this field (see the six points above).

News briefs and short articles to our newsletter, *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, will be greatly valued, as will notices of coming and recent conferences, seminars and other events; of new publications; and of active associations and organisations with children and media in view.

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As for publications and materials in other languages than English, French, German and Spanish, we kindly ask you for complementary translations of the *titles*.

We look forward to hearing from you, not least regarding any requests or suggestions you may have concerning Clearinghouse services. And we hope that you will come to appreciate our efforts – as a means of making your own work known in wider circles, and as a way to keep abreast of others' work.

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The UNESCO Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development

The Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development – the greatest manifestation for culture on a governmental level ever – held in Stockholm, March 30 - April 2, 1998, was designed by UNESCO to transform the ideas from *Our Creative Diversity* into policy and practice. This report was presented in 1995 by the World Commission on Culture and Development, established by the United Nations and UNESCO and led by Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. The report contains a programme of action aimed at influencing the international political agenda and actively engaging individuals, groups, organisations and states.

THE CONFERENCE, hosted by the Government of Sweden (Stockholm is also the Cultural Capital of Europe 1998), was attended by ministers and officials from nearly 140 of UNESCO's 186 Member States, and, in addition, by invited persons active in cultural fields all over the world – in total about 2,200 participants. The concrete purpose of the conference was to agree on an Action Plan that could serve as an inspiration for the Member States' international and national cultural policy and be a tool for UNESCO's continued cultural work.

The conference structure aimed at integrating policy, arts, science, and cultural practice: After an introductory Youth Forum, ministers focused their speeches on the Draft Action Plan in the official Plenary, where the final Plan also was adopted the last day. In the parallel official Forums, the conference's main themes – the challenges of cultural diversity and the challenges of recasting cultural policies – were discussed with intellectuals and cultural leaders. Also running in parallel, Agora – a non-official part of the conference – offered seminars, workshops, performances, exhibitions, and other presentations on a variety of topics co-ordinated mainly by non-governmental organisations. Lastly, there was a Business Forum of business leaders.

Culture, children and young people was one of eight sub-themes (the others dealt with pluralism, cultural rights, cultural heritage and cultural creativity, research and international co-operation, resources, media, and new media technologies). One Forum and two Agora seminars (see below) were especially devoted to children and young people.

THE FINAL ACTION PLAN is highly relevant to children and young people, as it states, among other things, that "Cultural polices should promote creativity in all its forms, facilitating access to cultural practices and experiences for all citizens regardless of nationality, race, sex, age, physical or mental disability, enrich the sense of cultural identity and belonging of every individual and community and sustain them in their search for a dignified and safe future". In the box in this text, we have further cited those policy objectives from the Plan recommended to Member States which explicitly mention children and young people, or media violence.

FROM THE FINAL ACTION PLAN:
POLICY OBJECTIVES RECOMMENDED TO MEMBER STATES:

2.9. Review all cultural policies, programmes and institutions in order to ensure in particular respect for the rights of the child, as well as those of vulnerable groups with special educational and cultural needs; take into account the needs and aspirations of the young – whose new cultural practices in particular should be supported – as well as the elderly who are all too often left out of cultural life.

4.2. Consider providing public radio and television and promote space for community, linguistic and minority services, particularly at the local level and with a view to promoting non violence.

4.4. Take measures to promote the education and training of children in the use of new media technologies and to combat violence and intolerance, by contributing in particular to the activities of centres or institutions specializing in exchanges of information on children and violence on the screen.

4.6. Promote in addition education conducive to the mastery and creative use of new information technologies among the younger generations as users and producers of messages and content, and give priority to education in civic values and the training of teachers in new technologies.

*More information about the conference can be found on the web site: **http://www.unesco-sweden.org**, where the **Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development** is also published.*

THE CHILD'S RIGHT TO CULTURE – A HUMAN RIGHT

This Agora seminar at the intergovernmental conference on cultural policies was arranged by the Swedish Save the Children and the Stockholm School of Arts. The overriding question was how culture, according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, can be placed in an international child rights perspective. This was also illustrated by one of the eleven preparatory papers of the conference, "Culture, Children and Young People", available on the web site above and written by Ms Britt Isaksson, Sweden, moderator of the seminar. Areas given specific attention in the discussion were: the importance of culture/creativity in the child's development process; culture as rehabilitation; the right to every kind of expression – creativity for survival.

Children in the New Global Media Landscape

ULLA CARLSSON, Director, Nordicom and CECILIA VON FEILITZEN, Scientific Co-ordinator, The Clearinghouse

This Agora seminar at the intergovernmental conference on cultural policies was arranged by the UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen. The point of departure was the Clearinghouse first yearbook, *Children and Media Violence*, just released (see page 13). Three researchers, Ms Nadia Bulbulia, South Africa, Dr Anura Goonasekera, Singapore, and Professor Ellen Wartella, USA, presented their research findings, as examples of contributions to the Yearbook, on the following three themes:

- children's access to media and children's media use;
- conditions of children's programmes;
- the influences of media violence on children.

In the subsequent discussion these research findings were related to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular Article 17 on the child's right to information and material that promotes his or her well-being, as well as the child's right to protection from injurious information, and Article 13, which states that the child shall have the right to freedom of expression. Among other things, it was stressed in the discussion that there is an urgent need to improve the conditions and diversity of children's media, and of adult media that children use. Further stressed were the needs of improving the image of children in the media; media education in school and for parents; children's participation in media production; as well as measures and activities which aim to limit gratuitous media violence and other harmful content, and which can counterbalance the negative consequences of media globalisation and concentration of media ownership.

One main conclusion of the seminar was that there is a great need of future research on children and media, relevant to the above-mentioned needs. This research should be carried out *both* by various nations in their own social and cultural contexts, *and* through increased co-operation between researchers on a cross-cultural comparative level, to give a more comprehensive view of the different perspectives of the new global and local media landscape.

Another main conclusion expressed was the importance of intensified co-production of children's programmes between nations – in addition to the (self-evident) necessity of producing more local programming. Economically beneficial both for poorer countries and for richer small countries, intensified co-production would give the children of the world a greater diversity of programmes, as well as programmes of higher quality.

FINALLY, THE SEMINAR FOCUSED on the fact that changing children's media situation means that the circumstances in their personal environments and in society must be improved. Firstly, the risk of unwanted media influences is far less for children who are growing up in safe conditions and who have good relations with parents, school and peers. Secondly, it is necessary that children and young people are allowed to participate actively in shaping their society's future. Statements about how we adults need to hear children's voices and how we must listen to them will remain empty words unless children are given more opportunities to affect their own conditions. If children and young people become involved in activities that both are meaningful for themselves *and* are important for the decision making process in society – then they will also automatically be represented and heard in the media. ■

VENEZUELAN CHILDREN'S OPINIONS OF MEDIA, VIOLENCE AND SOCIETY

In August 1995 and January 1996, two opinion studies were performed, each with 500 9- to 17-year-olds living in Caracas and six other cities in Venezuela. One study dealt with the media, the other with violence in society. In the samples, age, sex and social class were allocated by quotas. A few findings:

Television was the medium most used and preferred by these children, followed by radio. Very few children participated in a medium, but the great majority would like to do so.

More than half of the children believed that the media stimulate violence in society. However, they thought that other factors were the main cause of violence:

According to the children in the study, violence in the home consists mainly of screaming/insults, physical maltreatment/blows, struggles between families, as well as of violence on television. Violence in the children's schools was mostly due to gangs, teachers' treatment, and rioters. Violence in the child's community, the children said, presented itself primarily in the form of conflicts between neighbours, meetings of gangs, beatings in the suburbs, and insults and blows directed at children and young people.

Most children, about two thirds in the study, said that it is poverty that causes children and teenagers to get involved in criminality. The same proportion meant that robbery is the most usual cause when children and teenagers themselves are killed. Violent gangs and drug trafficking also play a part.

Source: *Voces para el Cambio. Opinion de niños, niñas y adolescentes.* Año 1, No 2, Octubre 1995, y No 4, Febrero 1996. Caracas: Cecodap.

The research reports are provided by Fernando Pereira, Centros Comunitarios de Aprendizaje (CECODAP), Caracas, Venezuela.
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VIOLENT PORNOGRAPHY ON THE INTERNET

A research report with this title was published in late 1997 by Tor Åsmund Evjen, SINTEF, and Ragnhild Bjørnebekk, the Police Academy, Oslo, Norway. The aim of the study was to map the occurrence and accessibility of violent pornography on the Internet – including child pornography – and describe techniques that can reduce its accessibility for children and young people. The researchers devoted five months to searching for violent pornography. Ca. 6,000 extremely violent pictures, with great probability falling under criminal law, were classified. Such pictures are censored on Norwegian servers, but servers exchange information all over the world and, in theory, anyone can put up a server.

The study focused primarily on news groups which directly or indirectly indicate a content where sex is related to deviant or extreme activity. (A more traditional way of collecting such material is via chat groups.) In each news group, 10-200 new pictures of violent pornography were discovered daily, pictures that can be downloaded and saved on individual hard disks. Still photos and drawings were most common. Films, games, "virtual reality" and interactive "live entertainment" are still reserved for users with special software.

Violent pornography is not just "there" on the Net. It has an anonymous, anarchistic, and limitless character. It is usually coded, requires payment, or some evidence of corresponding activity. But with some training, you can quite easily find it. There are guides and "robots" available to assist you, and if you do not obtain access to the violence free of charge, the demanded financial return is often very modest.

Preventive measures are discussed in the report.

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European Policy News on TV and Internet

ANNA CELSING
Free-lance Journalist, Belgium

In November 1997 the European Commission presented a Proposal for a Recommendation on the Protection of Minors in Audiovisual Services. Just a week later, an Action Plan Promoting Safe Use of the Internet which outlines complementary measures, was put forth.

First, the Commission focuses on what should be done to fight the spread of illegal material, such as child pornography, over the Internet. In this case, the main problem is tracking down the perpetrators. This calls for increased international co-operation and exchange of experience between the authorities. In addition, the police and judiciary should be given solid training in the use of new information technology, writes the Commission.

The controversial question of who is liable for material on the Internet is only mentioned in passing. A separate document focusing specifically on this issue will be presented in the course of 1998, promises the European Commission.

With regard to content that is legal but may be harmful to children, such as material containing violence, the Commission does not believe in legislative measures. For practical reasons as well as respect for cultural differences and freedom of expression, it believes that self-regulation at national level constitutes the most appropriate answer. However, writes the Commission, such regulation must be co-ordinated to some degree, and it proposes a set of common guidelines for the member states of the European Union.

This "code of conduct" includes rules regarding content rating systems, filtering soft ware and the establishment of special hot-lines to which Internet users can report material they think is illegal. Network operators should also promise to co-operate with the police authorities in the fight against the production and distribution of illegal contents. These rules should, however, not be more restrictive than called for; privacy, the freedom of expression and the free circulation of services must also be respected, emphasises the Commission.

In the second proposal, the Commission offers to help promote co-operation between the EU countries by setting up a new so-called action plan. This would provide subsidies for the establishment of a network of hot lines in Europe, co-operation with hot lines in other parts of the world and the development of internationally compatible rating and filtering systems, demonstration projects, etc.

The protection of children was also discussed at the 5th European Ministerial Conference on Mass Media Policy in December 1997. Again, self-regulation in combination with increased international co-operation were recommended.

A central issue in this context is what rating systems to adopt. How is the content to be classified? And by whom? In a declaration from another European Ministerial Conference, held in Bonn in July 1997, industry is encouraged "to propose rating systems which meet the needs of different users and take account of Europe's cultural and lingustic diversity". This will not be an easy task, considering the variety of views in different countries on violence and sex in the media. How such an approach can be combined with EU policy on information technology, which aims at fighting fragmentation and establishing a unified common market in order to boost the development of the sector, also remains to be seen. ■

VIEWS ON EC'S ACTION PLAN ON PROMOTING SAFE USE OF THE INTERNET

The *European Forum for Child Welfare (EFCW)*, a regional group of the International Forum for Child Welfare, released a paper including the following viewpoints and recommendations (here shortened) in relation to the Action Plan adopted by the European Commission on 26 November 1997 (EU COM IP/97/1041):

The Commission should prepare proposals for ensuring equality of access to the Internet and related technologies for all Europe's children. It should examine models, which might help guarantee that parental income or geographic isolation do not become barriers to tomorrow's world for today's children.

Responsibility for Internet matters is split across several Directorates-Generals within the European Commission and perhaps this weakens the overall drive and direction of policy. Funds for various further studies and actions in this area are becoming available but we hope to see the scale of resourcing increased in the coming period.

It is clear that the Internet is a global phenomenon and that many of the problems which most concern parents or young people require global solutions. There are some fearsome legal, political and technical difficulties but that is no reason for opting out. A strong political lead is required.

The proposals in the Action Plan – stimulation of hotlines; promoting the development and better dissemination of information about improved filtering and ratings systems; supporting initiatives which increase the public's and users' awareness of these issues – are all welcome and necessary but one wonders whether they are sufficient. They rely heavily on the industry itself to keep moving matters along. We doubt that the industry has the inclination to push things forward with quite the energy and sense of urgency which are needed. Can the Commission feel confident that progress will be made at an acceptable pace when so many of the industry actors they seem to be relying on are, in one way or another, closely bound up with US interests?

We see little discussion of the role of Interpol and Europol, and of the levels of resources they might need to deal with this growing area of work.

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Source: A Briefing on Children and the Internet by John Carr, Internet Consultant, NCH Action for Children. Published with the support of the European Commission by *European Forum for Child Welfare*, December 1997.

Content Rating and Blocking

Protecting Children and Maintaining Cultural Distinctiveness

NIGEL WILLIAMS
Director, Childnet International

Content rating systems have been developed in the USA to enable parents to choose what kind of web sites their children see. These systems reflect American values. Here, the goal of an international, objective content rating system is described, and how this could work with "profile software" to reflect local cultural values.

THE INTERNET provides an enormous library of material available day and night to children around the world. Such content is a massive educational opportunity offering a "window on the world". Many schools have web sites, and children are encouraged to experiment and undertake their own research. But as with other media there is also much that is unsuitable for children – pornography, violence, racism and other material geared for an adult audience. Such material is very easy to find or come across accidentally when searching for unrelated topics.

Conventional approaches to restricting access to adult material do not work on the Internet, e.g., restrictions based on "time, manner or place". Other media use third party rating systems or codes of practice followed by publishers and broadcasters. The Internet offers everyone the opportunity to be a publisher so that it would be impossible for organisations to rate or label all Internet content or even a small proportion of it. Self-rating systems offer at least the possibility of describing more content. The PICS (Platform for Internet Content Selection) protocol offers the mechanism by which rating labels can be understood in the browser. Linked with blocking software parents can choose the type of content they are happy for their children to see.

RATING INTERNET CONTENT is a new problem. The proposed technological solutions are recent and are still being developed and evaluated. But already some of the challenges are clear:

- How do you get sufficient coverage of web sites to encourage the use of rating and blocking software by parents?
- How can rating and blocking software be made available to all parents and schools that want to use them?
- How can you overcome the cultural bias (US centric) approach of existing rating systems?
- How can you make such systems easy to use for content providers and for parents alike?
- How can you ensure accuracy and consistency of ratings?

The Internet is an international system and content providers will not want to rate with different systems around the world. Unlike with movies there is no financial incentive to do so. Thus the key criterion for developing a rating system to protect children is that it is internationally acceptable.

FOLLOWING the Bonn Global Information Networks Ministerial Conference, Childnet International joined with the Internet Watch Foundation (UK), the Electronic Commerce Forum (Germany), the Australian Broadcasting Authority, and the Recreational Software Advisory Council, RSAC (USA), to form an International Working Group on Content Rating to examine how an internationally acceptable system might be devised. The Working Group agreed seven principles for a new rating system:

- be world-wide and open to as many cultures as wish to participate;
- be culturally non-specific in its content descriptions and as objective as possible;
- be easy for users especially parents to understand and use;
- meet the needs of content providers providing a simple means to rate content;
- have rigorous quality control mechanisms to avoid misrating;
- be based on a matrix of categories and of levels negotiated between different countries;
- be as adaptable as possible and work across technologies.

IT IS PROPOSED the new system's structure and method of use should take account of the needs of different cultures. The initial matrix of factors of concern (categories) and of the scale (levels) will be compiled following an international consultation process. The UK has almost completed such a process which offered new factors in addition to the nudity, sex, violence and language headings of the RSAC system. Discussion of different countries' proposals will lead to a matrix based on the broad world-wide concerns. The international rating system will thus lead to a multi-dimensional database of content labels. It cannot hope to encompass all kinds of content descriptors – only those which reflect factors of particular concern for children's access. But it can link to other content description systems (e.g., Dewey library classification) to make rating easy for content providers.

Users, though, may not wish to set their browser security features in the degree of detail that the international system would allow. They may prefer to have a simpler more culturally familiar rating system – perhaps one from an existing medium like video classification which may be age based. By using a profiling technique (allowed for in PICSRules), existing rating systems can be matched up with the international database of labels, so parents could for example click on a UK aged 12 button. Some agencies, e.g., the Catholic Church might want to develop their own profile for suitable material for children. This might be based on the international label system but also add further information. Whatever profiles are devised there will be a need for a culturally sensitive education programme on how the system works.

CREATING AN INTERNATIONALLY acceptable rating system is a huge challenge. It needs to happen quickly, but it must be genuinely international. It may not work – especially if content producers don't want to rate or users find it difficult to use. But what are the alternatives – inefficient blocking software, draconian legislation, overworked third party rating, limited "white lists"... It is worth the huge effort to try and construct such a system and have it adopted to provide parents around the world with an additional tool that will help them ensure their children can gain from the Internet's benefits without suffering from its less attractive side.

The International Working Group on Content Rating has set in place a work programme including international consultation which will lead to recommendations for an international system to be operational by the Autumn of 1999.

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The article is a summary of an address given at the ESPRIT (the EU information technologies programme) conference in Brussels on 24 November 1997.

VIOLENCE, CRIME AND THE ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA

The Australian Institute of Criminology, in conjunction with the Office of Film and Literature Classification in Australia, held an international conference on the above-mentioned theme in Sydney on December 4-5, 1997. The conference was attended by some 125 persons representing governmental councils and regulatory bodies, the police, universities, broadcasting institutions, and voluntary organisations. Speakers came from Australia, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK and the US.

Issues discussed were, among others, the relationship between violence in society and violence in film, video games and other media. The speakers were of the unanimous opinion that use of media violence is not the sole or direct cause of violent behaviour, but that media violence can be a reinforcing and instructing factor for those boys and men who, for other reasons, already run the risk of getting involved in crime.

Also discussed was how to diminish the likelihood that harmful media influences will occur, especially among these groups at risk. Various aspects of classification, labelling and regulation of media content, not least in the form of improved information to parents, were dealt with.

The conference was followed by a Classifiers Conference, primarily for regulatory film bodies.

Information provided by Ann Katrin Agebäck, Principal Secretary to the Council on Media Violence, Ministry of Culture, Sweden

In 1993, Senator Paul Simon urged the US television networks and cablecasters to appoint independent groups to monitor violence on television for three years to avoid regulation and facilitate self-regulation. The broadcast networks appointed one monitor and the cablecasters another. The third-year reports of both projects were recently published.

Television Violence Monitoring Project

The final report of the *Television Violence Monitoring Project*, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), was released in January, 1998. The primary purpose of this three-year study, financed by the networks (ABC, CBS, Fox, NBC), was to examine the content of broadcast network television during the hours of prime time and Saturday morning. These boundaries were occasionally extended to other times and to all television sources.

The focus of this qualitative study is not on counting the number of violent acts but on the contextual analysis of each of these acts. The researchers distinguished between those acts of violence which raise concerns because of the inappropriateness of the violence in the context of the story, and those acts which do not raise such concerns, according to fourteen criteria weighed together. Throughout the yearly reports (available on the web site), the evaluations of each single program are presented and explained, so that readers may understand the basis of the judgments and agree or disagree with them. The team also had regular contact and discussion with the broadcast networks during the research process in order to improve the content of television.

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National Television Violence Study

The third executive report of the three-year *National Television Violence Study*, financed by The National Cable Television Association, was released in April, 1998. This study consists of independent studies undertaken at four universities and co-ordinated at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). Here a few results of one of the four studies, "Violence in Television Programming Overall" at UCSB, are presented. It comprises the largest and most representative sample of television content ever evaluated in a single study. Each year, programs between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. on 23 TV channels (networks, cable, independent) were selected over a nine-month period to create a composite week of programming. Since 1994, more than 6,000 hours of programming have been analyzed.

Across the three years, a steady 60% of TV programs contain violence.

In prime time, however, the proportion of programs with violence has increased, from 53% to 67% on broadcast networks and from 54% to 64% on basic cable. Premium cable networks consistently contained the highest percentage of programs with violence in prime time, averaging 92%.

Summarizing previous research, the researchers concluded that exposure to TV violence can contribute to aggressive attitudes and behaviors, to desensitization to real-world violence, and to increased fear in viewers. But not all violent depictions pose the same degree of risk for viewers. The study focused on nine key features of violent portrayals that either increase or diminish the risk of harmful effects on viewers, especially children.

The analysis of these contextual features showed that most television violence is glamorized and sanitized. Across the three years, nearly 40% of the violent interactions on television are initiated by "good" characters who are likely to be perceived as attractive role models. Nearly three quarters of violent scenes contain no remorse, criticism, or penalty for violence. "Bad" characters go unpunished in 40% of violent programs. The long-term negative consequences of violence are portrayed in only 15% of violent programs, when averaged over the three years. Programs that employ a strong anti-violence theme remain extremely rare, averaging 4% of all violent shows. These patterns teach children that violence is desirable, necessary, and painless.

The study also examined portrayals of violence that pose a high risk of contributing to aggression. A high-risk portrayal includes *all* of the following elements: 1) a perpetrator who is attractive; 2) violence that seems justified; 3) violence that goes unpunished; 4) minimal consequences to the victim; and 5) violence that seems realistic to the viewer. The conclusion is that the way TV violence is portrayed continues to pose a serious risk of harm to children.

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The first All African Summit on Children's Broadcasting was held in Accra, Ghana, October 8-12, 1997. The most important achievement of the Summit was the Africa Charter on Children's Broadcasting. The Charter is in keeping with the international Children's Television Charter, but expands on the issues relevant to the African continent, and includes radio as well. In particular greater emphasis is placed on the educational and developmental needs of the African children and protection from all forms of commercial exploitation.

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AFRICA CHARTER ON CHILDREN'S BROADCASTING

Preamble

We, the delegates of the Africa Summit on Children's Broadcasting, Accra Ghana 8-12 October 1997, affirm and accept the internationally adopted Children's Television Charter that was accepted in Munich on 29 May 1995. In addition, we amend the SADC Children's Broadcasting Charter (June 1996) to read as the Africa Charter on Children's Broadcasting.

Without detracting from the International Children's Television Charter, we further adopt in line with the said Charter and in the spirit of the said Charter, our Africa Charter on Children's Broadcasting, which takes into consideration the needs and wants of children in our region.

1. Children should have programmes of high quality, made specifically for them and which do not exploit them at any stage of the production process. These programmes, in addition to entertaining, should allow children to develop physically, mentally and socially to their fullest potential.

2. Whilst recognising that children's broadcasting will be funded through various mechanisms including advertising, sponsorship and merchandising, children should be protected from commercial exploitation.

3. Whilst endorsing the child's right to freedom of expression, thought, conscience and religion, and protection against economic exploitation, children must be ensured equitable access to programmes, and whenever possible, to the production of programmes.

4. Children should hear, see and express themselves, their culture, their language and their life experiences, through the electronic media which affirm their sense of self, community and place.

5. Children's programmes should create opportunities for learning and empowerment to promote and support the child's right to education and development. Children's programmes should promote an awareness and appreciation of other cultures in parallel with the child's own cultural background. To facilitate this there should be ongoing research into the child audience, including the child's needs and wants.

6. Children's programmes should be wide ranging in genre and content, but should not include gratuitous scenes, and sounds of violence and sex through any audio or visual medium.

7. Children's programmes should be aired in regular time slots at times when children are available to listen and view, and/or be distributed via other widely accessible media or technologies.

8. Sufficient resources, technical, financial and other, must be made available to make these programmes to the highest possible standards, and in order to achieve quality, setting codes and standards for children's broadcasting must be formulated and developed through a diverse range of groupings.

9. In compliance with the UN policy of co-operation between states in the international community, the Africa Charter on Children's Broadcasting recognises all international covenants, conventions, treaties, charters and agreements adopted by all international organisations including the OAU and the UN affecting children, but with particular reference to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

11 October 1997
Accra, Ghana

The Second World Summit on Television for Children

CECILIA VON FEILITZEN
Scientific Co-ordinator, The Clearinghouse

The Second World Summit on Television for Children in London, March 9-13, 1998, attracted over 1,300 broadcasters, producers, writers, politicians, regulators, teachers, researchers, and consumer bodies from 74 countries. The event was chaired by Anna Home, until recently Head of Children's Programmes, BBC Television.

The Second Summit – like the first, organised by the Australian Children's Television Foundation in Melbourne, 1995 – aimed at advancing the diversity and quality of children's television. A myriad of keynote addresses, debates, seminars, and workshops dealt with the nature of the child audience; different programme genres; production and policy; financing; advertising; new media; globalisation vs. local survival; and co-operative ventures. Master classes and screeenings of children's programmes ran in parallel. Furthermore, 30 international junior delegates, aged 10-14, evaluated children's programmes from different perspectives and interacted with the adult participants.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SUMMIT are promised. The following lines represent only a few, subjectively selected opinions and happenings:

There were interesting forums on Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America, areas in which the great majority of the world's children are living. Many participants found these important forums much too short compared to the time devoted to Western European and North American issues.

In many African countries, most children do not have television, and broadcasting is often restricted to a few of the country's languages. The African delegates stressed the importance of radio, local and educational programming, programmes in the child's own language, better financing, and co-operation between countries in the same region.

In Asia, children's access to television differs greatly. For the most part, in both richer and poorer countries, there are few children's programmes, and these are often foreign and animated. Research, creativity and funding are areas that need urgent attention.

Eastern Europe faces the shock of free-market media. In many countries, children's programmes had better resources previously. Now, economic crisis and the multiplicity of foreign TV channels have led to less local production. Better finances and international co-operation are needed. However, domestic commercial alternatives have appeared, not least in the field of animation.

In Latin America, foreign productions mostly succeed without cultural resistance. Nevertheless, there are indications of a growing awareness of how local programmes that respect children, that respond to their needs, and that still make commercial sense can be developed. Also, a network for exchange of regional programmes was recently established.

Many Summit delegates felt that the topics of research and media education ought to be given more space in future summits.

Of the two sessions on research, one provided insights into children's changing media environment in India, Italy, the UK and the U.S. In the other session, organised by the International Research Forum on Children and Media and attracting a large audience, university and media industry researchers from Argentine, Australia, Portugal, Sweden, the UK, and the U.S. gave examples of how research can be of use to producers, policy-makers, regulators, lobbyists and others concerned with children and media.

EVEN IF PRODUCERS of children's programmes are aware of the fact that children need special consideration, many richer countries lack the political will to resist commercial pressures and create a subsidised space for children's programmes. In developing countries, programme-makers often work under very different and more difficult circumstances. Governments are burdened by issues like providing shelter, food, health services, electricity and other basic necessities for the population. Therefore, educational and voluntary organisations have an essential role in supporting children's media. In sum, much needs to be done as regards children, television and radio in the world. Each country must both work locally and co-operate regionally. And the world community must take a more serious interest.

One outcome of the 1995 Melbourne Summit was the Children's Television Charter. What has been its impact? Anna Home told that in a few countries, such as the Philippines, the Charter has been the basis of formal programme policy. Besides, many participants in Melbourne endorsed it, and it has functioned as an supporting argument in discussions on improving children's programmes. However, it has only been officially endorsed by thirteen countries. Also, the regional Summits in Asia, 1996, and in Africa, 1997, evidenced partly different concerns about children's programming. Thus, the international Charter needs some amendments, said Anna Home, and it must be formalised in order to be effective and adopted by more countries and governments.

The Charter inspired the 30 international junior delegates at this Summit to put forward their own Children's Charter (see next page). And there is no doubt a continuing need for people engaged in children, television and radio to meet on a global level. The European Children's Television Centre announced the Third World Summit in Athens in 2001. There were suggestions of further World Summits in South Africa and Egypt in 2004 and thereafter. ■

The charter below was written by the international child delegates invited to The Second World Summit on Television for Children.

Introduction to the Children's Charter, March 13, 1998

- We the junior delegates from the Summit want to thank the Summit for inviting us here and for allowing us to express our opinion about children's television around the world. We have tried to be very fair and honest in our comments but we have some constructive criticisms.
- We represent children from all over the world and we represent children of all ages.
- We find that some people in television do not seem to like children.
- We feel our opinions are often not respected. We are not asked what we want or what we need.
- Many programmes made for children talk down to children.
- Some programmes have too much violence and by that we mean violence just for the sake of violence. We do like action and lots of it but that doesn't always have to be violent. We don't want television to promote violence as the answer to solving a problem.
- Some programmes exploit children. They are made just to sell children toys or other products.
- We want all children to see someone like them on television. Why can't children on television have glasses? Why can't some children on television be overweight? Many children from around the world never see anyone like them on television who speak their own language. Sometimes they only see programmes from America.
- To help change all of this, we have written a charter for children's television.

THE CHILDREN'S CHARTER ON ELECTRONIC MEDIA

March 13, 1998

1. Children's opinions about television and radio should be listened to and respected.
2. Children should be consulted and involved in the production of programmes for children. Sometimes children can help make programmes.
3. Children should have programming that includes music, sports, drama, documentaries, news and comedy.
4. Children should have programmes from their own country as well as programmes from other countries.
5. Children's programmes should be fun, entertaining, educational, interactive, and should help them to develop physically and mentally.
6. Children's programmes should be honest and real. Children need to know the truth about what is going on in their world.
7. Children of all ages should have programmes created just for them, and the programmes should be on at times when children can watch them.
8. Children's television should discourage using drugs, cigarettes, and alcohol.
9. Children should be able to watch shows without commercials during the programmes.
10. Children's television should have presenters that respect children and don't talk down to them.
11. Violence for the sake of violence or violence to solve conflict should not be promoted.
12. Television producers need to make sure that all children, including children who have difficulty seeing and hearing, are able to see and hear all of the programmes for children. Programmes should be translated into the language of the country in which it is seen.
13. All children should be able to hear and see their own language and culture on television.
14. All children should be treated equally on television. This includes ages, races, disabilities and abilities, and all physical appearances.
15. Every broadcast organisation should have children advising them about children's programmes, issues and rights in television.

The American Center for Children's Television

THE AMERICAN CENTER for Children's Television fosters programming for young people that is both beneficial and popular. The Center's goals are to strengthen the capabilities, insights and motivation of children's programming professionals; to facilitate collaboration among TV, new media, education, research and child development experts; to evolve guidelines and standards for recognizing outstanding work; and to increase public awareness and understanding of "quality" television.

Activities in service of these goals fall into four areas:

Bringing Professionals Together: Seminars and workshops help TV professionals learn from others' expertise, and build a resource network. They are also a place for those from outside television to impart special knowledge that might result in more effective shows.

Sharing and Providing Information: The Center offers consulting assistance and referral to experts on specific topics, for program makers, researchers, educators, journalists, children's advocates and parents. The Center is the US International Council member of the World Alliance of Television for Children (WATCH), a global network of organizations supporting excellence in children's media. We were coordinating the North American Advisory Committee for the 1998 World Summit on Television for Children. In addition, the Center is represented on the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's Working Group on Children and the Media.

Recognizing Outstanding Achievements: The Ollie Awards honor America's best children's shows. Equally important, the process provides a unique forum for sharpening critical and creative skills.

Enhancing Public Awareness: Ollie Award-winning programs are held at Chicago's Museum of Broadcast Communications and New York's Museum of Television and Radio. The Center also organizes screenings of outstanding and innovative television programs from around the world.

THE CENTER IS supported and guided by a Board of Governors drawn from the top ranks of children's programming executives, representing commercial, cable and public television. Center services are available to everyone – independent producer or national network, local organization or international association – seeking a positive, practical approach to improving children's TV.

If the American Center for Children's Television can help you make contacts in the US, develop a project, plan a meeting, or locate resources, *please contact :*

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KIDS FIRST!

A Project of Coalition for Quality Children's Media

WORLDWIDE, parents ask, *"How can I find videotapes* or CD-ROMs for my children that are culturally diverse and worth watching?". KIDS FIRST! – a project of Coalition for Quality Children's Media, a not-for-profit organization based in the USA – evaluates and rates children's media, videotapes, CD-ROMs, and television, using a method that has been praised by parents and educators alike. It engages a volunteer jury comprised of adults and *children* of diverse geographic, socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds. KIDS FIRST!-endorsed titles appeal to people around the world and include many broadcast-quality programs on specialized theme categories important to children's development. KIDS FIRST! publishes a Directory of approved programs with descriptions, age recommendations and Jurors' comments.

In the testing procedure, titles are voluntarily submitted by the suppliers. Independent evaluations are conducted by Juries of more than 300 adults and more than 3,000 children. The adult Jurors – professionals, teachers, parents – hold academic degrees in child development, education, children's library sciences, or similar fields. The child Jurors are recruited by the Adult Jurors. Many juries are conducted at schools or day care facilities in the US where the population may represent over 100 different ethnic groups. By having five Adult Jurors and five Children's juries from various parts of the US, responses also represent several geographic regions. This, combined with professionally designed criteria and an evaluation tool that allows for both a quantitative and qualitative score, result in a content rating which give parents and caregivers extensive information to make their own decisions.

To qualify for a KIDS FIRST!-endorsement, a title must meet or exceed baseline criteria of 1) *no* gratuitous violence or sexuality; 2) *no* physical or verbal abuse; 3) *no* bias in terms of race, gender, culture or religion; 4) *no* condescension toward children, and 5) *no* unsafe behaviors. In addition, the Jurors acknowledge and identify benefits that are cognitive, behavioral, or social.

The Directory of KIDS FIRST!-endorsed titles is available for $5 (US) plus shipping and handling, by contacting CQCM. A listing is also available Online at its award-winning website.

CQCM can share with other countries its experience in establishing and operating a national, community-based rating service. We are also interested in exploring international program exchanges and networking.

For more information, please contact:

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In the Clearinghouse's last newsletter (No. 3, 1997), research articles on children's fear and related emotional responses to media contents were presented. Here, more articles address this topic.

Television and Children's Fear

A Swedish Perspective

INGA SONESSON
Formerly Associate Professor, University of Lund

Within media research, fear, terror and anxiety induced by TV-viewing is an area which has not attracted as much attention as TV-induced aggression. In my opinion, however, it is an important area, especially as it affects many children, and also very young children.

In this article some results from two projects within the Media Panel Research Programme at the University of Lund, Sweden, are described. Both projects include representative samples of children from Malmö, a town of 235,000 inhabitants in the south of Sweden. The 250 children in the first project, born in 1969, were followed for twenty years. Here results from their seventh to their seventeenth year are presented. During this period, 1975-1985, they were interviewed five times. The 250 children in the second project, born in 1986-1989, were interviewed twice, in 1989/90 and 1991. In both projects the parents were interviewed at the same time or answered mail questionnaires.

In order to obtain the most spontaneous answers possible to our questions about whether the child had at any time been frightened by television, we first asked "Is there any TV-programme which you dislike?". At all ages from 3 to 16, the most unpopular programmes were those they considered boring, meaning programmes in which people do a lot of talking. News, discussions and interview programmes are typical examples. Many children, however, gave an answer indicating that they dislike programmes because they had been frightened by them.

Children often look forward to exciting experiences when watching TV. They like to be a little scared, but it can be difficult to know whether the programme will give them the positive excitement they hope for. Many times they can experience something very dangerous and menacing.

ALTHOUGH CHILDREN ARE FRIGHTENED by various kinds of fictional and factual programmes, many examples show that 6-year-olds, both in the 70's and the 90's, very much disliked, and also had been most intensively frightened by, programmes containing realistic violence.

When the children's/adolescents' social background was controlled for, our results for both TV- and video-viewing can be summarised as follows:

- small children reported more often than older children that they had been frightened;
- girls reported more often than boys that they had been frightened;
- the higher the TV- and video-consumption, the more anxiety among the viewers;
- children at different ages reported different types of programmes as being most frightening – small children programmes with realistic violence, and older children/adolescents horror programmes;
- adolescents were more often frightened by video-films than by TV-programmes – 50 percent of all young people had been frightened when watching the VCR.

The best method for preventing anxiety brought about by TV-viewing depends, of course, on the child's age. If parents are not familiar with a programme, they should never let a small sensitive child watch the TV alone. If the child wants to watch TV and no adult can be there, it is better to let him/her watch a well-known video-film. In my opinion, small children should never be exposed to violence on the screen. They need first to have formed a basic trust before they have the power to resist all the misery in the world.

When children get older, discussing programmes at home and at school is the best way to neutralise anxiety in connection with TV-viewing. Our results show that talking with children and young people about their experiences in front of the screen not only diminishes negative effects but also increases positive effects of the medium.

The gender difference can be due to the fact that girls in our culture are allowed to show anxiety and fear to a greater extent. This could be one explanation as to why boys are more aggressive than girls. It is a well-known fact that suppressed anxiety and fear can cause aggression.

From 1975 to 1990 children's opportunities to watch TV in Sweden changed. In 1975 programmes did not start before late afternoon (except on Saturday mornings). In 1990 there were TV-programmes all day long, and ownership of VCRs was widespread. Contrary to what we expected, however, the 6-year-olds in 1990 spent less

time in front of the screen than the same age group in 1975. One possible – and hopeful – explanation for this, is that the parents in 1990 have grown up with television themselves, something which might have given them a better comprehension of small children's TV-watching. Compared to the parents from fifteen years earlier, these parents were more observant of their children's viewing, and of both its positive and negative influences.

We also found interesting differences between Swedish pre-school children's programme preferences in 1975 and 1990. In both surveys the children were asked to choose their favourite programme out of a range of different pictures, taken from children's as well as adult programmes. In 1975, 16 percent of the pre-school children chose an adult programme as their favourite; in 1990 none of the children did so. Children in the 90's did not watch as many adult programmes as children in the 70's, as there are now many more children's programmes broadcast from early morning to bedtime. This circumstance also had an impact on the pre-schoolers' answers to our question about whether they had at any time been frightened by a programme. In spite of a much larger TV-output, but because of more children's programmes and less TV-viewing generally, the amount and intensity of TV-induced fear had not increased among small children in Malmö.

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03

Television and Children's Fear

The Dutch Experience

PATTI M. VALKENBURG
Associate Professor, University of Amsterdam

Who hasn't been scared at least once as a child by a specific television program or movie? Nearly everybody who has been raised with television will be able to remember a specific television scene which evoked an intense fright reaction.[1] Many people will also recall at least one occasion in which they had trouble falling asleep, because a horrible movie scene popped into their minds, just when they had turned off the light.

Although the past four decades have witnessed more than 2,000 studies into the effects of television on aggression,[2] only very little research attention has been paid to the impact of television on children's fright reactions. A literature search on studies into the effects of media on children's fear, which I recently conducted,[3] yielded worldwide no more than 30 references. The search also revealed that the majority of the studies were conducted by US researchers.

In January and February 1997, I conducted the first national survey in the Netherlands to assess the prevalence and intensity of children's fright reactions in response to television. This study was carried out in collaboration with Joanne Cantor (see *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, No 3, 1997), and Allerd Peeters & Nies Marseille (Research Department of the Netherlands Broadcasting Corporation). Our sample consisted of 519 Dutch parents of children between the ages of 5 and 12, and their children.[4] We asked the parents "if their child had been frightened so much by TV during the preceding year that the fear endured after the program was over". Twenty-one percent of the parents reported that their child had been scared in such a way by something on television during the past year. Television news was most often mentioned as the cause of children's fear, but also the series *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* and the movies *Gremlins* and *It* were among the top 5 of fright-inducing programs.[5]

It is not a serious problem if children are a little scared by something on television occasionally. Children need to overcome some fears, like fear of darkness and fear of animals or monsters, in order to grow into competent and self-reliant adults. It is different, however, when children suffer persistently from violence encountered in a movie or news program, because then the burden could be too heavy and the child's psychological development might be impaired.

How long did the fear reactions last among the Dutch children in our study? Four fifths of the parents who said that their child had been upset so much that the fear endured after the program, reported that the fear of their child had disappeared within a few hours or days. But among the remaining one fifth of the children, the fear had lasted for several weeks or even months. Typical fright reactions among these children were: recurrent questions about the program, refusal to go to bed, waking up during the night, and recurrent bad dreams or nightmares.[5]

As mentioned, we asked the parents to indicate how often their child was upset by TV during *the preceding* year. However, it may, of course, be possible that a child

was not frightened by TV in the *preceding* year but will experience television-induced fear in another year in their childhood. How often does it occur that children who are raised with television, experience enduring fear on at least one occasion during their childhood? To answer that question, I asked a group of second-year university students (mean age = 24.6 years) to report retrospectively whether "they had ever seen a television show or movie that frightened or disturbed them so much that the emotional effect endured after the program was over". Seventy percent of the students were able to remember a specific television program or movie that had terrified them once in their life. Within 12 percent of those students their television-induced fear had lasted for several years! More than half of the students reported that they regretted having seen the frightening program or movie.[5]

THE RESULTS OF MY STUDY show that the impact of TV violence on children's fear is highly underestimated. Not only in academic circles, but also among politicians the debate on media violence often focus on its impact on aggressive behavior. This is not surprising, because aggressive children, and especially aggressive teenagers, cause far more inconvenience to a society than fearful children. People often treat their fears, just like their fantasies, as extremely private. Young children might still show their fears and worries, but teenagers, especially boys, often tend to hide them.[6] It is, as a result, difficult to study the prevalence and intensity of fear, because answers to direct questions about media-induced fear can easily yield underestimation. The following quote from one of my students clearly illustrates how television-induced fear can affect a teenager's life.

> *...I never told anybody how terrified I was. During the day I made fun of it. I enjoyed scaring the living daylights out of my younger sister by imitating scenes from the movie. But during the nights, it got to me. I didn't dare to turn off my light. And when it was finally turned off, I didn't dare to switch it on again, because I was scared to feel the hand of the devil, instead of the switch...*
>
> *For years, I lay in my bed, scared to death, unable to fall asleep. On real bad nights, I put some garlic under my pillow. In the mornings, I often felt exhausted. Then I skipped the first hour at school. That year I didn't get promoted to the next grade. It is obvious to me that "The Exorcist" played a major role in all of this...*
>
> (university student)

The findings of both the US and the Dutch studies suggest that the impact of TV violence on children's fright reactions is an undeservedly neglected research area, and also that fear might be at least an equally important outcome of media violence as aggression in children. Television news programs and movies have become increasingly graphic in the past decades. Future research should focus on the long-term impact of these programs, which are often already difficult for adults to process, let alone for children.

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Notes

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THE FIRST YEARBOOK FROM THE CLEARINGHOUSE IS NOW AVAILABLE!

Children and Media Violence

Carlsson, U. & von Feilitzen, C. (Eds.) *Children and Media Violence. Yearbook from the UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen*. Nordicom, Goteborg University 1998.

The thematic focus of the Yearbook rests on research concerning the influences of children's exposure to violence on television. Articles discuss findings on children and televised violence resulting from research undertaken in different parts of the world. A number of shorter articles describe the media landscape as it relates to children in a variety of countries. The documentary section presents statistics on children and the media, international declarations and resolutions, measures and regulations, and a selected bibliography.

Price Paperback: £20, $30. The Yearbook is free of charge for members in the Clearinghouse network.

To order, please contact: Eva Gidsater, Nordicom, Goteborg University
PO Box 713, SE - 405 30 Goteborg, SWEDEN, Fax: +46 31 773 46 55
E-mail: Eva.Gidsater@nordicom.gu.se

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'Cool' or 'Gross'

Australian Children's Attitudes to Violence, Kissing and Swearing on Television

GILLIAN RAMSAY
Assistant Manager, Research
Australian Broadcasting Authority

They should do it like Batman like when they punch and it goes 'Pow'. When they kiss it should go 'mushie, mushie'.
(Boy, 9 to 10 years)

This quote comes from a report released in 1994 by the Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) which explored children's attitudes to violence, kissing and swearing on television and looked at what concerned children on television.[1] It demonstrated that primary school children were discriminating in their television viewing, made active choices about programs and exercised self-censorship about things that concerned them.

The research study conducted in 1993 involved two stages: a qualitative stage that consisted of 18 exploratory focus group discussions with 5 to 12 year olds (108 children were included) and a quantitative (survey) stage that involved a final sample of 1,602 school children (8 to 12 years) in primary schools. A follow up stage with the parents of the children surveyed was conducted after the child study. This produced a sample of 517 matched pairs (each parent with their child).

NEARLY TWO THIRDS (62%) of the children surveyed claimed to watch television every day. Twenty-seven per cent said they watched television most days but not every day. Seventy-two per cent of children claimed to watch television mostly with other people while the rest mostly watched alone.

Nearly all children surveyed identified rules about watching television in the home (89%). The follow up survey with parents of the children surveyed supported these findings, with 98 per cent of parents claiming to use rules to regulate their child's viewing.

Children involved in the survey indicated they would walk out of the room or change the channel if they found material on television upsetting. Over half the children (55%) reported that, on occasion, they had stopped watching television (either left the room or changed channels) because something upset them. The reported incidence of leaving the room or changing the channel because something on television had upset them, was greater among girls (66%) than boys (44%).

If something like kissing, then a bit further I'll just pretend that I'm doing something else then if not, I'll just get up and walk out of the room and go and get a drink or something. Then I'll come back and it'll be all over and then it'll start again and I'll go and get another drink.
(Girl, 11 to 12 years)

CHILDREN SPONTANEOUSLY mentioned a number of themes on television which caused them concern. These themes were grouped into broad categories. Items grouped under violence were nominated by 50 per cent of children as causing concern. In particular, depictions relating to animals being hurt or killed (21%) or people being killed (16%) caused children concern. The category involving real life incidents portrayed on television were mentioned by 29 per cent of the children. This category incorporated a number of different items such as news and current affairs programs, war events, starving communities overseas, and programs about 'real life ghosts'. In contrast, responses relating to sex and nudity (8%) and swearing (2%) were less likely to be mentioned as upsetting incidents.

There were significant differences between boys and girls. Overall, a larger proportion of boys (36%) claimed that nothing on television had upset them when compared with girls (14%). Girls were more likely to be upset in particular by violent or real life incidents on television.

Older children found real life incidents more upsetting than younger children.

NEARLY ALL CHILDREN (92%) claimed to watch the news. Reasons most commonly given were personal interest (36%) and to find out what had happened that day (25%).

Most children surveyed said it was 'OK to hear about' but not necessarily 'OK to see and hear about' some of the news events presented to them. For example, 51 per cent said they did not like to see or hear about children being hurt or killed by members of their own family while 38 per cent said they did not like to see or hear about animals being hurt or killed on the news.

There were very strong gender differences with regard to children's concerns about the news. Generally, more boys than girls found it acceptable to see and hear about most news events.

Both in the focus group discussions and the wider survey, older children were generally more accepting towards watching and hearing about some news events than younger children. These events included children being kidnapped, people who have been shot or killed,

AN INDISPENSABLE HANDBOOK FOR THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

UNICEF's *Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 1998, by Rachel Hodkin and Peter Newell, is a comprehensive and practical manual with interpretations and analyses of the articles of the Convention, and examples of how they can and have been implemented world-wide. UNICEF intends to make the publication available on CD-ROM and the Internet.

A hard copy (US$45 plus postage) can be ordered from: UNICEF, New York, Fax: +1 212 326 7375 or by E-mail: hmartin@unicef.ch

car accidents that showed blood, and places damaged by earthquakes or floods.

A SELECTION OF 17 PROGRAM SCENARIOS, involving varying degrees of violence, action, horror, kissing and swearing was presented to the children in the survey questionnaire. There were significant differences between boys and girls in their reactions to all program scenarios. Girls were more likely to react negatively to most scenarios.

The type of violence a program contained largely influenced the way children reacted to the program. Half the children (50%) claimed they 'really like to watch' programs that are action packed with fights, guns and car chases. Almost half (49%) 'really like to watch' programs about monsters and ghosts that are real.

Nearly two thirds (62%) said they 'don't like to watch' programs that show children being hurt or whacked and 60 per cent did not like to see programs that made it look as if animals were being hurt or killed. Fifty-nine per cent 'don't like to watch' programs that show parents arguing and hitting each other.

Forty-four per cent said that they 'don't like to watch' programs that show bodies with lots of blood.

> *I like it if it's horror, for example, Dracula, but if it's based on a true story I will probably turn it off.*
>
> (Boy, 11 years)

More children found programs with adults 'kissing a little bit' more acceptable (37% said they really liked to watch them, 10% didn't like to watch them) compared with programs in which adults were 'getting carried away with their kissing' (25% really liked to watch them compared with 34% who did not).

A majority of children (58%) said they did not like to watch programs showing grown up men 'with hardly any clothes on' while 47 per cent of children said they did not like to watch shows featuring women 'with hardly any clothes on'.

Over a third (35%) of children claimed they really liked to watch programs with a 'little bit of swearing' (14% did not). However, 39 per cent of children said they did not like to watch programs with people using very rude words (22% did).

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Note

1. The report was titled *'Cool' or 'Gross'. Children's attitudes to violence, kissing and swearing on television*. Published by the ABA in 1994, it reported findings of the first part a large study by the ABA on children and television. The ABA had previously conducted research into adult attitudes on the classification issues of violence, offensive language and nudity on television and wanted to give children a much needed voice on issues about television. The second part was published in the monograph *Kids Talk TV: 'super wicked' or 'dum'* (1996) and focused on children's viewing habits and what they liked and disliked about television programs.

NEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR MEDIA AND CHILDREN IN CHINA

In order to promote research on media communication and child development, the Journalism and Communication Institute (JCI) of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) established the Research Center for Media and Children in June, 1997. The Center is a non-profit NGO organization.

The Center has three major aims: to develop research on media and children; to promote media development for children; to start up media education for children (at present, there is no media education available for Chinese children).

Examples of research fields that the Center wants to develop are: policies and laws on media for children; media effects on children; child audience research; media education; children and culture. The Center also plans to establish a database and to raise a strategy for children's media development.

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SOUTHEAST ASIAN FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN'S TELEVISION – A NEW INITIATIVE

The major television stations of Southeast Asia have joined forces to form the Southeast Asian Foundation for Children's Television (SEAFCTV). The objectives are:

1. To promote the awareness of the tremendous role television plays in preparing the children of Southeast Asia to meet the challenges of the 21st century with values and dignity, contributing significantly in their unique and special way to the community of nations.

2. To instill in the minds and hearts of network owners, producers, advertisers and all other concerned parties the need for more responsible and relevant children's programming.

3. To generate a groundswell of multi-sectoral support towards the cause of Our Children...Our Culture...Our Future – Television for the 21st Century.

4. To strengthen cultural roots in the region by providing a venue where key players in the television industry can meet and discuss the production of excellent children's programs produced within the Southeast Asian cultural context. This can be done by opening up possibilities for co-production and any other such systems or models of cooperation that will lead to responsible and high quality children's programs in the region.

5. To come up with a framework for a plan of action on multi-sectoral level that will implement the Children's Television Charter in Southeast Asia.

For further information, contact:
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The Norwegian Government's Campaign to Combat Violence in the Visual Media

LIV-JORUNN KOLNES
Project Manager
The Norwegian Media Violence Campaign

In its efforts to create a safer, warmer and more just society, the Norwegian government, in 1993, presented a national prevention programme for increased security and socialisation in everyday life. This programme includes a number of measures aimed at preventing violence. One is *The Campaign to Combat Violence in the Visual Media*, a three-year project during 1995-1997, which was a common initiative of the Ministries of Cultural Affairs; Justice; Children and Family Affairs; and Education, Research and Church Affairs. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs was responsible for the preparation. A steering group was established with representatives from the ministries, a media researcher and a leader from outside the government.

The questions connected to media violence are ambiguous and complex. To address this complexity, the work has been comprehensive and the measures have been numerous and heterogeneous. Parents, pupils, teachers, researchers, voluntary organisations, representatives of the TV, video, film and computer business have all been important collaborators.

THE MEDIA VIOLENCE PROGRAMME'S point of departure is the fact that television and other visual media play an enormous role in everyday life, particularly for children and adolescents. While television serves in the education and socialisation of children, there are also several problems associated with excessive watching of violence on the screen. The assumption is not that media violence causes real-world violence, or that it effects every child in the same way. Nonetheless, over the past 40 years, an extensive body of social science research has been performed, and although it does not give clear-cut answers, researchers seem to agree that media violence can reinforce and consolidate a negative development among children and adolescents who grow up in a culturally and socially deprived environment.

Most households in Norway have a wide range of TV channels, and an increasing number of children and adolescents have access to PCs, computer games, and television sets in their rooms. Also, with the digitalisation of television technology and the growth of interactive television, the programmes that the consumer wishes to receive are, to an increasing degree, controlled by the recipients themselves. This reduces the possibilities of carrying out a national media policy based on regulation of the availability of certain categories of programme content.

Commercialisation and internationalisation also influence programme services. With the exception of the Norwegian national public service broadcasting, today's television services are financed by advertising or payment per programme. This implies a shift away from the media's role as disseminator of social debate and information to a provider of more and more entertainment. Technological media development raises completely new issues, particularly in connection with the use of computer games. While there traditionally exists a clear boundary between ourselves and media events, computer games wipe out this distinction.

AN IMPORTANT GOAL of the media violence programme was to acquire a broad mobilisation against violence in the media. Another objective was to create awareness of the public's power and responsibility, as well as to place responsibility on those who disseminate media violence. Measures directed at children and adolescents have been given priority. The steering group has insisted on putting media literacy in primary school on the agenda, in order to spread knowledge and understanding of visual language as a basis for a more critical and conscious use of media. Further, instruments of legislation and control in relation to new media have been assessed and updated.

The measures of the campaign can be divided into six main areas – mobilising, informative, knowledge and attitude promoting, supervisory, statutory, and those oriented toward research and evaluation.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE? The measures named in the action programme are now in place. In addition, new measures have been initiated and supported, mostly in local settings. It is particularly the mobilising and the proficiency- and attitude-promoting measures that have been in focus. The mobilising measures were prioritised in the first phase. The aim was to set the theme of media violence on the agenda, create debate and mobilise responsible adults on various levels. We also wished to create alliances between the different players within the media branch, schools and educational institutions, voluntary organisations, and the public. Conferences were arranged in the major cities, and regionally and locally.

One central mobilising measure is a brochure (*The visual media – friend or foe?*) that includes advice for parents concerning their children's media use. 700,000 copies of the brochure were distributed to all parents with children aged 3-15 years throughout the country. Further, a video – aimed at raising the level of competence and stimulating commitment of parents and caregivers – provides an ideal platform for discussion and debate at parental meetings in kindergartens and schools. In the wake of this, several initiatives for local measures have been established, and the topic has been raised at many parent meetings across the country. In

addition, there has been an increasing interest from physicians and health centres who want to focus on the theme in their meetings with parents.

Concerning the proficiency – and attitude-promoting work with children and adolescents, it was emphasised that the school system should be an active participant. It was desirable that image interpretation and film analysis should be given a more prominent place in schools. These thoughts were based on the view that acquisition of theoretical and practical media proficiency, and active communication through the language of film, increases the likelihood that children will develop into conscious and critical media consumers. The steering group gave copious recommendations for the new media curriculum in primary schools, but these were only to a small degree implemented. Nevertheless, several projects addressing questions about media violence were performed. Large media workshops focusing on different aspects of the manipulative possibilities of the visual media have taken place in primary schools, and pupils have been given opportunities to participate in creative filmwork.

The steering group has initiated training courses for a total of 250 media teachers from all counties. A corresponding training course for instructors for pre-school teachers has been arranged. Educational booklets and videos on media violence have been prepared for the primary school and for senior secondary level. In addition a whole range of local courses on children and media influence for teachers, pre-school teachers, parents and pupils have been supported economically. Also, numerous theatre performances on violence have been played in schools which challenge the pupils to develop alternative methods of solving conflicts. Inter-departmental and inter-municipal measures at local governments, radio programmes broadcasting themes that set media violence in a critical light, projects and courses initiated by police departments working with violence prevention, and media projects for so-called "outsiders", have received financial support.

Considerable support was also given to organisations and groups concerned with attitude promoting work directed at multi-cultural environments.

FINALLY, as existing research on media violence is largely based on other cultures, it was necessary to increase Norwegian research on this theme. Several research projects have been set in motion, among others: A nation-wide study of juveniles' attitudes to media violence; a survey of the distribution of violent pornography on the Internet; an analysis of violence and gender in computer games; a project about municipal cinema and freedom of choice of repertoire; and a study on how the new "reality shows" on TV relate to fact and fiction, and how youngsters relate to these programmes.

The period of the Norwegian media violence campaign has ended, but will be followed up by the Norwegian Board of Film Classification, address: Filmens hus, PO Box 371 Sentrum, NO – 0102 Oslo, NORWAY

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FSF in Germany

IN THE EARLY YEARS of private television in Germany the pressure on politicians to tighten up the legal regulations was very strong. Various ways of changing the regulations for the protection of minors were discussed, but most of them were rejected as being unconstitutional. In November 1993 the channels decided to found the *Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle Fernsehen* (FSF) (the voluntary self-regulation of television). The FSF's main concern is focused on the protection of minors in relation to the representation of violence and sex on television and its effects on the recipients.

FSF EXAMINES CERTAIN PROGRAMMES prior to their transmission to minimize their potential danger for children and young viewers. The examinations are carried out by a neutral expert examining board. The channel makes an application and the examiners decide whether: the channel's request can be accepted, to recommend a later transmission time, to recommend cuts to be made, or to advise the channel not to broadcast the programme at all. A decision is reached when all three examiners agree; therefore the strictest opinion counts.

In view of the abundance of German channels and the increase of European channels that can be received via satellite, a comprehensive reduction of representations of violence in the media cannot be achieved only by tightening up the regulations in Germany. What can be limited, however, is the easy availability of these programmes. Thus, one of the main points in protecting young people should be educational measures.

The general aim should be developing the ability of young people to use media in a competent and critical way. It is also important to inform parents and teachers about the effects of excessive television consumption and about educational and legal measures to protect minors.

The FSF brochures, video films and the magazine *tv diskurs* provide information about the protection of minors in Germany with respect to audio-visual media. FSF has published a summary of teaching units for media education in primary schools, as well.

In cooperation with schools, the FSF also organizes media projects with children and young people. The aims of the events are to make television consumption a subject for discussion through a critical reflection on one's own media consumption or through discussing attitudes to moral values resulting from the media. Other aims are to develop a practical competency with media, such as film analysis, information about production processes, commercial links and creating own productions.

To contact FSF:
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Web site: http://www.fsf.de/index.htm

Media Education, Communication and Public Policy

An Indian Perspective

A book by Keval Joe Kumar, published by Himalaya Publishing House, 'Ramdoot', Dr.Bhalerao Marg, Girgaum, Bombay - 400 004, cloth 1995, paper 1996, ISBN 81-7493-180-5.

Media education in India had its beginnings in the efforts of Amruthavani of Secunderabad and the Xavier Institute of Communications, Bombay, to impart basic media skills to secondary school students. That was in the mid 70's and early 80's. The short courses introduced students to the functioning of the mass media, and to film appreciation. Media education has come a long way since then. It has now become a priority activity of the Catholic and Protestant churches, and is taught regularly as part of the school curriculum in some states like Tamilnadu, while in others it is taught outside the schoolroom.

KEVAL JOE KUMAR – whose *Mass Communication in India* (Bombay: Jaico Paperbacks, ISBN 81-7224-373-1, first published in 1981, followed by several reprints and revisions, of which the 2nd revised edition is forthcoming in 1998) is a widely known textbook in Indian universities – tells the story of the growth of the media education movement world-wide, and especially in India. Based on his doctoral thesis on the subject submitted to the University of Leicester in 1988, the study argues that "media education should ideally be illuminated by a 'macrosocial' perspective which would take into account public policy on communications and related issues. At the 'microsocial' level, media education would take into account the media choices and interests of groups participating in its study".

A case study of the media interests and preferences of Bombay's high school students (of Christian, municipal and private schools), and also those of parents and teachers, provides the basis for planning media education strategies in the Indian context.

The study recommends that at earlier stages of (school) education, it would be advisable to start with dissection of the content, of questions of gender and stereotypical portrayals of religious and linguistic minorities, of the gap between reality and media representations. At a later stage, the manner of 'construction' of media images and media rhetoric could be taken up for study and analysis. By high school or college, however, the questions probed should include: Why do media representations and media rhetoric take a particular shape and form? What are the roles of advertising and public relations in promoting those representations and rhetorical techniques and genres? What are the ideologies/values thus promoted, say by the multinationals?

Thus, there ought to be a gradual progression from simple concepts like 'perception', 'representation' and 'construction' to more complex ones like 'ideology', 'power', 'control', and the media as 'cultural products' and 'communication industries'. Ultimately, though, media education programmes will need to raise critical questions about society, and the role of media in that society; about public policy, and the role of media education in moulding that policy.

However, the study cautions that media education is not "a panacea for the inequalities and injustices in Indian society, for the rigid control over broadcasting, or for an elitist press. It cannot by itself ensure active public participation; it can only contribute to a greater awareness of the need. Democratisation of communications is dependent on several other factors in society as well... Media education in schools is only part of a wider social process".

The book includes a 50-page update on the changing media scenario in India since the advent of cross-border satellite television and the plethora of channels in English, Hindi and the regional languages, and the expansion of telecommunication and computer technologies. Kumar examines the implications for media education in this new media scenario.

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THE MEDIA AWARENESS NETWORK/RÉSEAU ÉDUCATION-MÉDIAS offers a great amount of information on the government and industry response to media violence in Canada, as well as many facilities for media education. Its Media Violence section contains: the industry codes; the classification systems for TV, film, videos and video games; information on the standards councils; the 1995 Canadian Radio television and Telecommunications Commission Hearing on Violence in Television Programming; reports, articles and surveys; a catalogue of videos on media violence; links to brochures and tips for parents; and seventeen teaching units addressing the subject of media violence, complete with handouts for students. See **http://www.screen.com/mnet/eng/issues/violence/default.htm** or, in French, **http://www.screen.com/mnet/fre/enjeux/violence.htm** (under construction).

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Media Education Research Section of IAMCR

Glasgow, Scotland, July, 26-30, 1998

The following sessions on media education will be held at the IAMCR (The International Association for Media and Communication Research) Conference in Glasgow:

- Current research in media education;
- From "traditional" media education to media education including interactive media/multimedia (research projects and development work);
- Curriculum – state of the art in various countries.

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Arab-U.S. Association for Communication Educators

Third Annual Conference on Privatization, Trans-national Communication, and Media

Cairo, Egypt, September 7-10, 1998

Communication educators and media professionals throughout North Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, Europe and the United States are invited to the Third International Conference of the Arab-US Association for Communication Educators.

One session at the conference will deal with media education.

The conference is hosted by The American University in Cairo. Co-sponsors include Cairo University, AUSACE, and Georgia State University's Center for International Media Education.

For further information, please contact:
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Adham Center for Television Journalism
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E-mail: H_AMIN@aucegypt.edu

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SWEDEN

JUNIOR SUMMIT 1998

10- to 16-year-olds all over the world have been invited to participate in a 6 month on-line forum on how to improve the state of children and the world, culminating in a week-long international summit on November 15-21, 1998, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA.

Junior Summit II
MIT Media Laboratory, Cambridge, MA 02139, USA

The International Children's Day of Broadcasting

Sunday, December 13, 1998

Quality programming for, about and by children – The International Children's Day of Broadcasting is celebrated around the world on the second Sunday every December.

This year you can "Tune in to Kids" in company with Meena, the new ambassador for the Day. The animated character Meena is a South Asian girl who gets into situations where she has to deal with discrimination and children's rights issues. Meena is the result of two UNICEF-initiatives. One where animators from around the world have used their medium to express children's issues. The other initiative is called Cartoons for Children's Rights; over 100 thirty-second animation shorts are produced by animators around the world to promote children's rights.

The International Children's Day of Broadcasting is a joint initiative of UNICEF and the International Council of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. To support broadcasters to involve children in their broadcasting, UNICEF can help with spots, a music video, animated graphics and animated shorts.

For more information, please contact:
AnneMarie Kane, UNICEF, Division of Communication
3 United Nations Plaza, 9th Floor, US – New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel: +1 212 326 7288, Fax: +1 212 326 7731
E-mail: akane@unicef.org Web site: http://www.unicef.org/icdb

Australian and New Zealand Teachers of Media International Conference: Where are we at in 1999?

Auckland, New Zealand, January 14-17, 1999

This bi-annual meeting of several teacher's associations, is being held for the first time in New Zealand and promises inspiring and challenging perspectives on media teaching, research and theory.

The conference appeals to teachers of media and journalism; teachers at all levels, of English, social studies, history, etc; academics in media studies/cultural studies; producers and policy makers along with media studies students.

Four major strands will be in focus: media teaching; the current media environment; media technology; and debates in media studies.

For more information, please contact:
Anne Winnall, President NAME, c/- Macleans College
Private Bag 94201, Howick, NZ – Auckland, NEW ZEALAND
Tel: +64 9 535 2620 (ext 811), Fax: +64 9 535 2621
E-mail: WL@macleans.ak.planet.co.nz or jonw@ihug.co.nz

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER AND THE YEARBOOK IN THE FUTURE?

If you have not yet registered in the Clearinghouse network, please contact: Pia Hepsever
Tel: +46 31 773 49 53. Fax: +46 31 773 46 55
E-mail: pia.hepsever@nordicom.gu.se

Summit 2000

Children, Youth & the Media – Beyond the Millennium

Toronto, Canada, May 13 - 17, 2000

Summit 2000 is an international conference which will bring together some 1,500 media (television, film, computer) producers, distributors, exhibitors, regulators, researchers and educators to examine issues around children, youth and the media.

The Summit will focus on three major areas:

- programming and production;
- distribution and access;
- media education.

With keynote speakers in plenary sessions and up to 80 workshops, panel discussions and presentations each day, new solutions to the challenges facing screen-based media for young viewers can be developed by those who create, produce, distribute and teach media around the world. There will be simultaneous translation of plenary sessions into French, Spanish and English.

Summit 2000 is being coordinated by the Alliance for Children and Television, the Jesuit Communication Project, the American Center for Children's Television and the Association for Media Literacy. It will be developed with guidance from a Steering Committee whose members represent Canada, Central and South America, Australia, the CARICOM countries, Africa, Asia, the USA, and Europe.

Registration information becomes available early in 1999.

Information in English, French and Spanish on:
Web site: http://www.summit2000.net

Or contact:
Summit 2000
60 St. Clair Avenue East, Suite 1003, CA – Toronto, Ontario
CANADA M4T 1N5
Tel: +1 416 515 0466, Fax: +1 416 515 0467
E-mail: summit2000@interlog.com

MANY THANKS TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS!

News briefs and short articles to *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, are greatly valued, as are notices of coming and recent conferences, seminars and other events; of new publications; and of active associations and organisations with children and media in view.

DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEXT ISSUE IS SEPTEMBER 1, 1998.

The Second International Forum of Child and Media Researchers

will take place in Sydney, Australia, the last week of November in 2000

The International Forum Committee met in London, March 11, 1998, to start planning the Second International Forum of Child and Media Researchers. Gareth Grainger, The Australian Broadcasting Authority, was elected Chair after Elisabeth Auclaire, GRREM, who was elected Deputy Chair.

The *Croniques du Forum* series, issued before and after the First International Forum will continue, and merge with the newsletter of the International Research Forum on Children and Media (IRFCAM), to become the main vehicle for communication about the Sydney Forum.

For further information, please contact:
Research Section
Australian Broadcasting Authority
PO Box Q500, Queen Victoria Building
AU - Sydney, NSW 1230, AUSTRALIA
Tel: +61 2 9334 7700, Fax +61 2 9334 7799
E-mail: research@aba.gov.au

The proceedings from **YOUTH AND MEDIA – TOMORROW**, the First International Forum of Child and Media Researchers held in Paris, April 21-25, 1997, are available from the organiser, GRREM (Group de recherce sur la relation enfants/médias; Research Group on the Relationship between Children and the Media). The forum proceedings contain, in their original languages (English, French, Spanish), the speeches and papers delivered, as well as summaries of the debates, a final review report, and a directory of the participants – nearly 1,000 pages compressed in a handy format: two floppy disks accompanied by a written introduction and an index of the speakers and papers.

The price is 160 FF + postage. Please, indicate if you prefer a PC or Mac version.

GRREM
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FR – 750 16 Paris, FRANCE
Tel: +33 1 44 30 20 22, Fax: +33 1 45 25 09 57
E-mail: grrem@club-internet.fr

The Third World Summit on Television for Children

is announced to take place in Athens, Greece, in 2001

For information, please contact:
E.C.T.C. – European Children's Television Centre
20, Analipseos Str., Vrilissia, GR – 152 35 Athens, GREECE
Tel: +301 68 51 258, Fax: +301 68 17 987
E-mail: ectc@beryl.kapatel.gr

THANK YOU FOR SENDING PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION

Listed below is a selection of materials which have been sent to the Clearinghouse, but are not mentioned in any other context. In coming issues of the newsletter we will continue to publish references to recent books, articles, reports and other materials, including those sent to the Clearinghouse.

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THE CLEARINGHOUSE

We welcome researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organisations and interested individuals to the Clearinghouse information network. As a participant you will receive our publications (in English) with the contributions of other network participants from all parts of the globe. (Participation is free of charge.)

The value of the Clearinghouse as a forum rests in the breadth of its coverage and the commitment of its participants. In short: the more relevant information we gather, and the more who contribute from all continents, the better our services.

We are interested in research related to children, young people and media violence, and in documentation of measures, activities and alternatives of relevance to this field.

News briefs and short articles to our newsletter, *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, will be greatly valued, as will notices of coming and recent conferences, seminars and other events; of new publications; and of active associations and organisations with children and media in view.

We are also grateful for receiving relevant publications and materials — if possible, two copies of each, please! They will successively be informed of in the newsletters, and be documented at the Clearinghouse into a growing knowledge base for overviews, compilations and bibliographies of interest to various groups of users.

As for publications and materials in other languages than English, French, German and Spanish, we kindly ask you for complementary translations of the titles.

We look forward to hearing from you, not least regarding any requests or suggestions you may have concerning Clearinghouse services. And we hope that you will come to appreciate our efforts — as a means of making your own work known in wider circles, and as a way to keep abreast of others' work.

VISIT THE CLEARINGHOUSE ON THE WEB

You can find Clearinghouse information and all issues of our newsletter on Nordicom's web site at:
http://www.nordicom.gu.se

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THE CLEARINGHOUSE IS TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND EFFECTIVIZE KNOWLEDGE ON CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND MEDIA VIOLENCE, SEEN IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD.

Nordic Council of Ministers

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Nordic Information Center for Media and Communication Research

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News on Children and Violence on the Screen

Vol 2, No 2-3 1998

A newsletter from

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

at Nordicom
Göteborg University
Sweden

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News on Children and Violence on the Screen

published three times a year by

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen, at

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The Clearinghouse is located at Nordicom

NORDICOM is an organ of co-operation between the Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The overriding goal and purpose is to make the media and communication efforts undertaken in the Nordic countries known, both throughout and far beyond our part of the world.

NORDICOM uses a variety of channels – newsletters, journals, books, databases – to reach researchers, students, decision-makers, media practitioners, journalists, teachers and interested members of the general public.

NORDICOM works to establish and strengthen links between the Nordic research community and colleagues in all parts of the world, both by means of unilateral flows and by linking individual researchers, research groups and institutions.

NORDICOM also documents media trends in the Nordic countries. The joint Nordic information addresses users in Europe and further afield. The production of comparative media statistics forms the core of this service.

NORDICOM is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

The Nordic Information Center for Media and Communication Research (Nordicom) has set up an international clearinghouse on children and violence on the screen. The Clearinghouse receives financial support from the Government of Sweden and UNESCO.

The Clearinghouse is to contribute to and effectivize knowledge on children, young people and media violence, seen in the perspective of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The prime task is to make new knowledge and data known to prospective users all over the world.

The International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen informs various groups of users – about

- research findings concerning children, young people and media violence,
- ongoing research on children and media violence,
- children's access to mass media and their media use,
- training and courses of study on children and the media,
- positive alternatives to media violence, and
- measures and activities which aim to limit gratuitous violence on television, in films, and in interactive media.

The object of the Clearinghouse is three-fold: to attract attention to the question of violence on the screen and its role in the lives of children and young people, to stimulate initiatives and activities to combat gratuitous violence, and to help provide a better basis for policy in the field.

The Clearinghouse is user-oriented, which means that our services are offered in response to demand and are adapted to the needs of our clients.

The Clearinghouse publishes a newsletter and a yearbook.

We welcome researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organisations and interested individuals to the Clearinghouse information network. As a participant you will receive our publications (in English) with the contributions of other network participants from all parts of the globe. (Participation is free of charge.)

The value of the Clearinghouse as a forum rests in the breadth of its coverage and the commitment of its participants. In short: the more relevant information we gather, and the more who contribute from all continents, the better our services.

We are interested in research related to children, young people and media violence, and in documentation of measures, activities and alternatives of relevance to this field (see the six points above).

News briefs and short articles to our newsletter, *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, will be greatly valued, as will notices of coming and recent conferences, seminars and other events; of new publications; and of active associations and organisations with children and media in view.

We are also grateful for receiving relevant publications and materials – if possible, two copies of each, please! They will successively be informed of in the newsletters, and be documented at the Clearinghouse into a growing knowledge base for overviews, compilations and bibliographies of interest to various groups of users.

As for publications and materials in other languages than English, French, German and Spanish, we kindly ask you for complementary translations of the *titles*.

We look forward to hearing from you, not least regarding any requests or suggestions you may have concerning Clearinghouse services. And we hope that you will come to appreciate our efforts – as a means of making your own work known in wider circles, and as a way to keep abreast of others' work.

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Violence on the Internet

Which contents on the Internet are problematic? How accessible are they for children? To what extent do they threaten children's development? These questions are dealt with in a recent research report by Jo Groebel and Lucia Smit[1]. Some answers are based on discussions, some on an empirical analysis of the Internet.

Problematic forms of Internet content are defined in the report as physical and mental violence. For one month each, four students searched for such content on web sites, in news groups and in chat boxes. Tips on how to find chat boxes were given by a specialist on Internet and child pornography. Although most material on the Net is in English, special attention was also given to German language output

THE EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS can be summarised as follows:

Violent pornography is relatively easy for anyone to find – in news groups. However, violent pornography in extreme forms is not as easily available, but instead aimed at interested persons who come into contact with like-minded people in chat boxes. Here, numerous examples of child pornography and sadism can be found. In this case, the problem is not so much children as addressees but as victims.

Racism is spread in surprisingly many ways, not least on web sites, and is quite easy to access.

Extremely violent portrayals are also spread to a relatively large extent and are easily obtainable. One problem is to distinguish fictive from realistic portrayals (so-called "snuff" photos and videos).

There are web sites that propagate violence in the context of sects, cults, glorification of weapons and sex, etc. Such *violent sects* are less accessible, and mostly used in a context not comprehensible for the uninitiated. In this case, the Internet primarily functions when an initial contact has been made.

Violent games – probably the most attractive type of problematic content for children – are offered across a very great spectrum, are easily available and range from earlier traditional action games to very realistically designed games of brutality and torture. A new dimension is that of actively struggling, alone or in virtual communities, against true-to-life figures ("living persons").

IN SHORT, the analysis provided examples of all these kinds of problematic contents, but also showed their varying availability. Generally, one can divide the problematic content into that which is available for a broad group of Internet users, and that which is aimed at closed sub-cultures. Consequently, at some time during their search, each experimental surfer is sure to land in a news group with hard-core pornography, in some extremely violent portrayals, or in a racist web site, not to mention locating violent games. However, in order to gain access to extremely violent pornography, including child pornography, and to violent sects, specific actions are required. Those who search systematically and purposefully will find these contents, as well, but usually after payment, procuring special software, and/or concrete proof of a corresponding interest (mostly by delivering material oneself).

The authors discuss measures against problematic Internet contents: media education, pre-warning systems, public discussion and information, professional self-regulation, and international agreements.

Note

1. Prof. Dr. Jo Groebel & Drs. Lucia Smit (1997) *Gewalt im Internet. Report für die Enquete-Kommission 'Zukunft der Medien' des Deutschen Bundestages.* Departement Media Psychology, Universitat Utrecht
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and Children Media Violence

Carlsson, U. & von Feilitzen, C. (Eds.)
Children and Media Violence.
Yearbook from the UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen.
Nordicom, Goteborg University 1998.

Price Paperback: GBP 20 or USD 30. The first copy of the Yearbook is free of charge for persons in the Clearinghouse network.

To order, please contact: Pia Hepsever, Nordicom, Goteborg University, P.O. Box 713, SE – 405 30, Goteborg, SWEDEN
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Who Is Growing Up Digital?

A NEW BOOK, written in collaboration with 300 children on the Internet, offers ideas about how the Net might be used in the future. *Growing Up Digital. The Rise of the Net Generation* by Don Tapscott, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1998, is optimistic about the possibilities of the interactive Net. According to the author, the consumer has control on the Net, in contrast to the traditional broadcast media. The author foresees a future where the Net Generation – those born with the digital media, now beginning to think, learn, work, play, communicate, shop, and create in fundamentally different ways from their parents – develops and imposes their culture on us all, thereby reshaping society and how individuals interact.

ALTHOUGH FULL OF VISIONS AND BELIEFS, often not based on facts, the author is also careful to underline the dangers of a "digital divide" between the information haves and the have-nots – between those who have access to computers and the Net and those who are forced to sit on the side-lines.

The division between (information) rich and (information) poor is not improving in the U.S. – instead the gap is widening. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, less than 5 percent of children in all grades (6-18-year-olds) in low income families had used a computer at home in 1984, whereas the corresponding figure among children in high income families was about 25 percent. In 1997, less than 10 percent of children in low income families had used a computer at home, while about 70 percent of children in high income families had done so.

The author also emphasises that universal access at school is a myth. Even if difterences between children of different socio-economic groups are smaller there, use is often less frequent, and computers and Internet access are often limited to the library or the staff room.

This gap is certainly not limited to the U.S. The information gap between have and have-not countries seems to be growing. According to a source cited by the author, of the 23.4 million households connected to the Net in 1996, 66 percent were in North America, 16 percent in Europe, 14 percent in the Asian Pacific, and only 4 percent in the rest of the world.

Getting Net Smart

INTERNET PROVIDES A NEW WORLD for curious children, offering educational opportunities, entertainment and information. However, parents all over the world worry that their children might come across harmful content or get into situations were the own privacy is exposed. Children, parents, teachers and everyone using the Internet, need to gain awareness and learn to become "Net Smart".

On the web site of NCH – Action for Children **http://www.nchafc.org.uk/internet/index.html** the publication *Children on the Internet – Opportunities and Hazards*, edited by John Carr and Annie Mullins, NCH, is available on-line at no cost. The booklet presents a series of contributions which highlight the major issues of interest or concern about how the Internet is shaping the education and welfare of children and young people. On the same address *A Parents' Guide to the Internet* is presented.

The web site of Young Media Australia, "Parents Internet Resource Centre", is one of many interesting sites where children, their parents and teachers can learn about Internet and safety on the Web. Cyber safety tips are located at: **http://www.youngmedia.org.au/yma/cyber.html**

Examples of other web sites with the aim of making the cyber world a safe place to be, and whith further links and information on the opportunities and hazards of the Internet, are presented at:

America Links Up	http://www.netparents.org
Centre for Media Education	http://tap.epn.org/cme
Childnet International	http://www.childnet-int.org
Info 2000	http://www2.echo.lu/info2000/infohome.html
SafeKids	http://www.safekids.com
SmartParent.com	http://www.smartparent.com
Media Awareness Network	http://www.screen.com/mnet
Internet filtering software:	
Cyber Patrol	http://www.cyberpatrol.com
Net Nanny	http://www.netnanny.com
Safe Surf	http://www.safesurf.com
Surf Watch	http://www.surfwatch.com

Sexual Abuse of Children, Child Pornography and Paedophilia on the Internet: An International Challenge

is an international meeting organised by UNESCO in Paris and planned to take place on January, 18-19, 1999.

In a press release of 3 September 1998, UNESCO Director-General Frederico Mayor declared the need for urgent action against the sexual and commercial exploitation of children. Key non-governmental organisations, personalities, institutions and specialists in the fight against paedophilia, child pornography and sexual abuse of children on the Internet are being invited to formulate a global plan of action against these crimes.

For further information, please contact: Carlos A. Arnaldo Chief, Communication Policies and Research, UNESCO 1 rue Miollis, FR-75015 Paris, FRANCE, Tel: +33 1 4568 4240 Fax: +33 1 4568 5755, E-mail: c.arnaldo@unesco.org

EU Recommends Protection of Minors

ANNA CELSING
Free-lance Journalist, Belgium

On May 28th, 1998, the Council of the European Union – i.e. ministers from all the member states – unanimously adopted a Recommendation on the protection of minors and human dignity in on-line audio-visual and information services. (The text is available on the Internet at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg10/avpolicy/index.html)

The Council recommends that the EU member states promote self-regulation by operators of on-line services, encourage broadcasters to experiment with new means of protecting minors and informing viewers, facilitate the establishment of hot-lines for handling complaints about alleged illegal content, promote improved awareness among parents, educators and teachers as well as facilitate access to quality content and services for minors.

The industries concerned are urged to co-operate in drawing up codes of conduct for the protection of minors in conjunction with relevant parties (such as users, businesses and public authorities). Pointing out the need for self-regulation to be co-ordinated to some degree, the Council proposes a set of common guidelines for the EU member states regarding labelling of contents, filtering software for parental control, etc.

IN MAY, THE COUNCIL also reached a political agreement on a draft 4-year Community Action Plan for promoting safe use of the Internet (1998 - 2001) providing financial support for the creation of a European network of hot-lines, developing filtering and rating systems, demonstration projects and other measures. The budget is set at ECU 25 million.

These decisions have not been uncontroversial. Denmark voted against the Action Plan, pointing out that the measures could impede the freedom of expression. In the European Parliament, too, criticism have been voiced.

A parliament report points out that EU legislation does not cover criminal law. Therefore it is illusory to believe that the Action Plan alone could stop illegal and harmful content on the Internet. Also, as children are often highly computer-literate, steps have to be taken to ensure that the software cannot be circumvented. Nor will promoting closer co-operation between EU states be enough. Only world-wide agreements between the EU, the U.S., Japan and other states would really help.

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION is not unaware of the global dimension of the problem. In fact, in February it proposed that an International Communications Charter be adopted to "set a framework for international policy co-operation". One of the examples of areas needing co-ordination is harmful and illegal content on the Internet, writes the Commission in its report (see: http://www.ispo.cec.be/eif/policy/com9850en.html)

The Commission intends to organise an international Ministerial Conference, by early 1999 at the latest, to discuss the charter. Meanwhile, it is working on several projects relating to the Action Plan mentioned above.

The University of Oxford has been commissioned to conduct a comparative study on the parental control of broadcasting, film, audio-visual and on-line services in the European Union in order to assess the advantages and disadvantages of introducing new control measures. Meanwhile, in August, a call for tenders was published regarding, inter alia, preparatory work for setting up hot-lines in member states and a feasibility study for a European system of content self-rating.

NEW CHILD ONLINE PROTECTION ACT IN THE USA

On October 21, 1998, president Clinton signed several technology-related Bills into law, including the **Child Online Protection Act** (COPA).

The first part of the act criminalizes commercially distributed material on web sites that are considered **harmful to minors**, without putting such material behind age-verification screens or restricting the access by minors in other ways. Penalties includes fines of up to $ 50,000 for each day of exposure on the Net, and up to six months in prison.

The act states that "notwithstanding the existence of protections that limit the distribution over the World Wide Web of material that is harmful to minors, parents, educators, and industry must continue efforts to find ways to protect children from being exposed to harmful material found on the Internet".

Free-speech advocacy groups have raised protests, claiming that the act has "serious constitutional problems".

Children's Online Privacy Protection is the second part of the act which regulates collection and use of personal information from and about children under the age of 13.

"This new law represents a historic decision on the part of Congress, one that recognizes the need to find ways to protect our privacy online", comments Kathryn Montgomery, president of the Center for Media Education (CME). "It's an important first step, one that balances the need for effective safeguards with the goal of providing children with the full benefits of interactivity on the World Wide Web."

Sources: The United States Senate, web site: http://www.senate.gov
Communications Media Center at New York Law School, web site: http://www.cmcnyls.edu
Center for Media Education, web site: http://epn.org/cme
SafeKids, web site: http://www.safekids.com/legis98.htm

Child Safety on the Internet

THE CONFERENCE "Child Safety on the Internet – Developing Policy and Practice", organised by the Centre for Europe's Children, was held at Glasgow University, U.K., on September 9th 1998. The conference aimed at discussing problems about pornography and possible risks of sexual exploitation of children who have access to Internet.

Some of the main issues that arose at the conference included that of helping parents in providing safety for children, and in overcoming their own fear of technology. Local authorities, agencies, everyone should have a role in organising this. It was agreed that there is a need to try to develop some specific action procedures. Some initial ideas came from the conference:

- Developing child protection procedures to address the use by paedophiles of the Internet.
- Ensuring that the child safety plans being developed by local authorities, address positive ways of ensuring child safety on the Internet.
- Where children's use of the Internet is being promoted, there is a need to address the parents to protect children through raising awareness and getting them involved.
- Better and more visible advice given out with computers to advise parents about safety issues.

A conference report and the speakers' presentations are available on the web site: **http://eurochild.gla.ac.uk**

Following the conference, the Centre would like to develop positive action in partnership with those who attended the conference and others interested. There is a discussion forum on the Centre's web site.

THE CENTRE FOR EUROPE'S CHILDREN, set up in September 1997, is a documentation and information centre, supported by the Council of Europe and UNICEF. The aim of the Centre is to promote Children's Rights by developing an information base; promoting good practice and policies; stimulating research and evaluation; and developing networks of policy makers and interested parties to share ideas and information. The strategy is intended to serve as inspiration and guidance for senior policy-makers and all those who actively support children's causes in their activities.

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OUR WARMEST THANKS TO OUR READERS

for your overwhelming response to our letter dated June, 22, 1998, where we asked for research, facts and thoughts on the image of the child in the media, children's participation in the media, and other areas.

The material and suggestions you sent are of enormous value and we plan to include as many of them as possible in our publications, after consulting each contributor, of course. We apologise for delays in the still on-going process of answering and thanking all of you.

CHILDREN'S HOUSE IN CYBERSPACE

Children's House on the Internet – **http://childhouse.uio.no** – is an international information source for anyone interested in child-related issues. It functions as an interactive resource centre and a meeting place for the exchange of information that serves the well-being of children.

Children's House is a co-operative initiative of AIFS, CIDEF, Children's Rights Centre, Childwatch, Consultative Group, CRIN, Family Life Development Centre, IIN, NOSEB, Save the Children, ISCA, UNICEF, UNESCO, World Bank and WHO.

The sites or "floors" in the Children's House are:

Child Rights

Early Childhood

Health

Learning

Research

Conferences and Seminars

International Training Courses

Children's House News

Information. This page provides links to information collections and documents stored on the web in countries all over the world. A variety of contents are presented, for example prevention of child abuse and neglect, journals with relevance to children, Internet resources for children, information about homeless children and street kids.

NGOs Involved with Children's Issues. Here you can, among other things, participate in an interactive discussion on fighting child pornography on the Internet.

Violence Against the Eye

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The aim of this on-going research project is to study in detail the mechanisms at work when youngsters perform violence, focusing on:

- how violence in their *symbolic* social world (e.g., their personal history of media violence; and the violence presented in their favourite video films) may contribute to violent acts,
- how violence in their *real* social world (e.g., their experiences as witnesses to violence; as violent offenders; and as victims of violence) may contribute to violent acts,
- how their experiences in the *symbolic* and *real* world contribute to constructions of violence in their *individual, subjective* world (e.g. concepts and understandings of the phenomenon of violence; interpretations of violent acts; and experienced fear of crime).

The project relates to theories of social cognitive processing and constructions of reality; to social learning theory; and to theories of attribution and identity formation.

Structured in-depth interviews, lasting from 6 to 16 hours, were carried out separately with twenty 13- to 18-year-olds at risk, as well as with a matched control group of twenty ordinary youngsters. All participants in the study also filled in a questionnaire about their media use and preferences, and a personality inventory (KSP Schalling). In addition, content analyses were used to study the violent sequences and heroes in the youngsters' favourite films: *Die Hard II*, *Kickboxer IV*, and *Natural Born Killers*.

SOME TENTATIVE RESULTS ARE:

Of the three films, 39% of the total contents of *Kickboxer IV* and *Natural Born Killers* consist of violence. The corresponding figure is 21% for *Die Hard II*. *Kickboxer IV* has the most severe violent scenes, *Natural Born Killers* the second most. The violence exhibited in these two films represents relations between persons, with or without weapons, that are constructed such that they are possible to copy. The violence in *Die Hard II* is not as easily copied.

The violent film portrayals largely coincide with what are documented as being influential and problematic acts of violence, in that they – reward or fail to punish the aggressor; depict violence as justified, and without consequences; consist of uncriticised violence; depict violent aggression in sexual contexts; depict violence that is not associated with humour in the story; are portrayals that correspond to the real world and real world-violence; are portrayals of heroes as violent aggressors; are problematic when it comes to identifying who are the heroes and who are the villains; depict acts of revenge as the motivating aspect of the story.

Furthermore, the study reveals crucial differences between the youngsters at risk and the control group. The young persons at risk experience weaker and less consistent regulations from parents in their everyday activities, including media use. As a consequence, brutal violence in films is repeatedly consumed at an early age. The youngsters at risk also experience severe conflicts in dealing with others, which is why they often use media when alone, thus lacking mature adults or peers as negotiating partners.

In contrast to the control youngsters, those at risk have experienced a cultural "overload" of violent events during their upbringing. They have often experienced violence as witnesses, as offenders, as victims, and as media users. They are often part of antisocial groups that exhibit violent behaviour.

In the group, they use a cluster of different media contents symbolically related to each other (for example, gangster rap, gang movies, literature about hurting when in fight – or Pink Floyd, Jim Morrison, Cheach & Chong/ Pulp Fiction and literature where drug-users are in focus) in order to build and indicate a symbolic identity and consolidate their identity as an antisocial and marginalised group. They conceive of severe violent acts, e.g., kicking a defenceless person, as being acceptable. They consider revenge to be an acceptable reason for violence. Their norms and conceptions of violence coincide more with norms presented in violent media culture, while the ordinary (control) youngsters' norms reflect societal ones. Furthermore, the youngsters at risk explain their preferences for media heroes and favourite films in terms of traits connected to aggression and violence.

However, both among the youngsters at risk and among the ordinary ones, few experience fear of crime when outside, and few experience fear due to documentaries about crime. If they are scared, this feeling is attached to thrillers they have seen, or to real criminal events in their environment.

IN THIS CONTEXT, MEDIA CONTENT seems to function as a model in the at risk youngsters' performance of violence. When viewing the same video films again, several of the boys rewind to specific kick-boxer fights to practise the kicking and boxing shown. And when involved in violent events in the streets, several perform their violence in accordance with the fictional kicking and boxing. Some street gang members use content from American gang movies to "psych themselves up" before going to town prepared to fight.

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Young Criminals' Thoughts about Real Violence and Film Violence

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The purpose of this research study,[1] financed by The Council on Media Violence and The National Council for Crime Prevention in Sweden, was to describe the experiences of eight criminal boys and their thoughts about violence in reality and on the screen, as well as the relation between them. I have made informal, in-depth interviews with each boy separately, during six to eight hours. The questions dealt with the boys' experiences of violence and their opinions about the rules and limits, violence as an inherent or learnt phenomenon, the influences and learning effects of different films, heroes as models, and the psychological meaning of different films and themes. The original research idea belongs to Ragnhild Bjørnebekk at the National Police Academy in Norway.

The boys interviewed are 15-19 years old. They were all at this occasion sentenced to public care and placed at treatment centres. Seven of them come from broken families. Four boys are in touch with their fathers. Three have frequently been raised in different foster homes. Two have reached final certificate from the compulsory school, but proceedings such as, for example, suspension from class or school, and back-up from an assistant in class, have been frequent. Preventative interventions from the police have occurred in school. All boys have been part of criminal gangs, but have committed crimes long before gang involvement. They all view themselves as criminals. Yet, they have a wish to live quite ordinary lives.

SOME TENDENCIES IN THE ANSWERS ARE:

These young boys have seen a large amount of violence on the screen during their growth. Nevertheless, they associate violence with their own experiences in reality.

The boys have clear rules and limits for when and how violence is allowed to be practised, but these cease to apply in critical situations. They all agree that violence is acceptable as self-defence, when taking revenge or avoiding being insulted. Using violence in order to steal from other people is not acceptable. The same is valid for violence against children and girls. Nevertheless, the boys give many examples of how their standards are abandoned in the presence of a real threat. "Set fire straight... it goes just... bang! You think and consider and decide to fight or not. Most often you choose to fight. There is a hell of an adrenaline shot! Settle down rather fast. Then you become calm." This statement also is an example of "crossing the boarder", a process concerning the very moment when you go from the state of holding back over to striking or kicking. All except one describe this moment as a choice.

THE OPINION OF THE MAJORITY is that violence is something you simply know how to do. "Every human being is born to be violent", says Thomas. And Hassan tells that "violence is something you can just do. You just hit!" But you can learn different forms of violence by practising. "Instinct and practising", Jens concludes. "You can learn techniques like round kicking, but not to fight the ordinary way." Most of the boys describe how they observe and imitate the techniques from different models – partly from films, partly from others in real life. Especially in the lower teens they imitated models from films. The films about the Karate Kid were important then, as well as the movie-star Bruce Lee.

THE MOST FREQUENT CAUSES of violence are conflicts and provocations either because of insulting or because of the attitudes of others. The standard is friction, then something escalates it, the rage increases, provocations are expressed, e.g., "fuck your mother", until someone strikes. The violence exists as an inner potential inside everyone, ready to explode. Behaviours that we experienced earlier are matured and can easily be actualised when we are in a similar situation later on, the boys say. Those who have seen and experienced much violence bring it up easily again. Andreas describes the process: "Well, you think of certain things. Sometimes when you watch a film, a fight for instance, you think 'yes, he avoided hitting like that...' that's how you think sometimes... and then there it is in the back of your head somewhere."

THE CONNECTION between the boys' own norms for violence and media violence is conceived as weak, but they allow themselves to be inspired by the movies. No one admits that his opinion about violence is influenced by film violence. On the other hand, they all agree that children can be influenced. They are all definitely opposed to letting their own future children watch violent films. In spite of their belief, they can be inspired by films when they appear as actors in real life. For instance, the Swedish film *Sökarna* [The Searchers] served as a cult-movie for Andreas and his gang. They watched it together over and over again and studied all of the details before they went out to fight. Another film *Blood In Blood Out* worked in the same way. According to the boys, you also can learn atti-tudes from the films. By watching models you even learn behaviours connected with how emotions are expressed. Some of the boys assert that how one talks is important – the way you express yourself, for instance, when you are threatening someone. "You learn how to win a conflict and how to talk. Then you know how to

say it the next time." John agrees: "You do imitate. If you see a good phrase in a movie, you try to imitate it all the time."

IT IS ESPECIALLY THE HEROES on the screen who supply attitudes and types of behaviour. The boundary between character and actor, fiction and reality is floating. That makes it easier to charge the hero with those qualities and contents necessary to be able to identify with him. The "bad guy" and the hero are not necessarily parted – neither on the screen nor in the boys' imagination. "The hero can be the villain, as well, but he is more honest and expresses what the bad guy wants to hide", Bob says. The hallmark of the hero is not that he is lawful, but that he has high morals and a good purpose, which reaches beyond the law. He is fair, well organised and masters the situation. In their creations, Robert de Niro, Al Pacino, and Sean Connery, for example, incarnate this kind of hero – a hero that seems to have such a powerful attraction on these boys.

The identification with the heroes actualises fundamental internal themes within the boys. *Heat, Scarface, The 30th of November, Karate Kid I-III, Shawshank Redemption, Calitos Way,* and *Blood In Blood Out* are examples of films to which the boys are very attracted. These films are not different from what teenage boys in general are used to seeing at the movies. But for each boy in the study, every single story mentioned has a personal meaning because it reflects wishes and motives which are important for them.

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Note

1. Gudrun Uddén (1998) *Man ville vara hjälte – Unga kriminella om faktiskt våld och filmvåld* ["I wanted to be a hero." Young criminals' thoughts about real violence and film violence] (in Swedish). Stockholm, The Council on Media Violence, Ministry of Culture, and The National Council for Crime Prevention, Sweden.

Youth and Reception of Violence in Action and Horror Films

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My on-going project, named as in the title, is part of a larger Danish research programme called *Youth, Media and Cultural Identities* funded by the Danish Research Council of the Humanities. The director of the programme, which is now moving towards its end, is professor Kirsten Drotner.

THE AIM OF MY PROJECT is to study to what extent it is possible to talk of the creation of cultural identities in relation to young people's reception of popular genres such as horror and action films. Furthermore, the aim is to discuss what is meant by cultural identity and what kind of cultural identity is produced by these young people in the act of reception. What interests me, therefore, is addressing issues of media violence from an angle that, at least from its inception, opposes media panic in relation to young people and media violence. The idea is not to minimise the impact of the increasing amount of violence in the popular fiction of the contemporary culture at large. The idea is, rather, to discuss media violence from a different point of view – one that takes the viewing situation and viewing environments into consideration as important contributors to the way violent films are perceived and made sense of by young people.

THE FOCUS OF MY STUDY is on the reception of video-films in groups and reception as a group activity. The theoretical point of departure follows the tradition in contemporary media reception studies in that film viewing is regarded as an active process, whereby meaning is constantly produced through a negotiation between media content and the spectator's prior experiences and immediate viewing situation. The empirical material consists of qualitative interviews with 15 young people aged 15 to 17, half of which are girls. (In a large quantitative study about young people's media use carried out within the research programme, around 40 percent of the young people who selected one of the two following response alternatives, were girls: I watch horror films "every day" or "at least once a week".)

My main question addresses the phenomenon popularly called "video nights" or "video evenings", where young people gather regularly for a week-end evening's and night's session of marathon video watching. My respondents explain that either they form "clubs" consisting of the same people who meet at regular intervals, or – probably more often – they form spontaneous groups of friends or classmates, which vary from time to time. They watch three or more films in a row, often carefully scheduled in terms of preferred genre. But the actual choice of films is then made rather randomly according to what is readily available or what can be agreed upon; they just seem to know for certain that they want comedies and horror films, for example. Now and then, the group stays overnight, falling asleep on the floor when the session is over. Sometimes they also sleep during sessions and then wake up again to continue watching and chatting.

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This seems to be quite a common phenomenon in Denmark among teenagers – and probably also among children a bit younger. According to a questionnaire I distributed amongst about 100 school children at these ages, everybody knows of the phenomenon and quite a large proportion of them had participated in video evenings themselves. Also, many teachers and librarians know of video nights from their pupils.

WHAT PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS have I drawn? One important point seems to be that young people form what one might call media cultural communities around the VCR and popular films. But often horror films and violent media content are watched as only one part of a more extended film menu. Very seldom did these young people watch three action films or three horror films in a row. Thus, it seems that horror films and violent action films, too, are chosen primarily in order to provide specific moods or rather, intensities that the viewing community is able to play on, amplify or reduce at will. It seems to these young teen-agers, too, that attending a video night was a way of having a good time in a very relaxed way. Thus, video nights formed a common space for girls and boys to meet, where no sexual tensions and sexual games existed. Where you could just be you!

One girl, for example, told that in order to prepare for an evening of watching horror films on video, she and a girl friend decorated her room with bunches of garlic. By using such Central European folklorist tricks for keeping vampires at bay, they seemed to take precautions against what might happen – at the same time as they sort of invited horror to come closer. And, furthermore, they seemed to orchestrate these emotions with an ironic twist, since garlic would appear to be a very naive way of protecting oneself from evil. Finally, in a way, they also constructed a room of horror, that symbolically amplified and extended the screen horror into a wider space. Since garlic might prevent vampires from jumping out of the screen, the girls played consciously with distinctions between fiction and reality, the naive symbol making it very clear that they knew precisely that they were preparing for an evening of watching video at a distance, at the same time as they curiously challenged these very fearful emotions.

In relation to video violence, this orchestrated production of a certain mood might be understood as a way of both experiencing fear and horror and learning how to control such feelings. Some of the young people told how they negotiated violent scenes by means of ironic or playful comments, at the same time as they often amplified the screen horror by staging similar scenes in the living room.

For instance, one girl told about watching horror films and thrillers in a mixed group, recalling how the group members seemed to continuously build up thrills and then release tensions through laughter. They all seemed to hear noises from the kitchen during the film and asked each other to go out and look if anyone was there. By feigning fear, they seemed to heighten the horror on the screen at the same time as they used the screen as a sort of sound effect and backdrop to their own fearful voices. But someone always agreed to go check and, of course, came back with information that no one was there. Then laughter broke out until the next time some innocent noise was heard by a sensitive listener, who had to make sure the others were aware that strange things were going on. And so on. In this respect tension and relief, control and lack of control, laughter and fear were constantly staged, and emotions were investigated and tested. Video films were, thus, important props but nevertheless mostly a means to another end in these video watching communities – namely having a good time.

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"Mommy, I'm scared." How TV and Movies Frighten Children and What We Can Do to Protect Them is a book written by U.S. professor Joanne Cantor and published by Harcourt Brace & Company, New York, in 1998.

Even if children and young people sometimes like to be a little frightened by the media, and even if some are attracted by media violence, many frightening media influences are not at all desired or intended. The author says that every night, in homes all across the country, parents are confronted by children in distress. Their children tremble and sob or have nightmares, climb into their parents' bed and refuse to sleep alone. Some of them suddenly give up activities they once enjoyed, feel anxious about being alone, or refuse to go to new places. Most of these children are reacting to, or have been traumatised by, something they saw on television or in a movie. What is worse, the anxiety they experience may not dissipate for days or even weeks. Often it will last for months, years, and even longer.

Based on the author's many years of academic research, the book primarily addresses parents and other people who take care of children. As the title indicates, it contains information that will help them understand their children better and give them useful suggestions about how to deal with children's responses to frightening media contents. The book is balanced, well grounded and easy to read, with many examples of children's and parents' own words. It takes into consideration the child's individuality and age, as well as the types of realistic and fantasy contents that are more or less scary. For researchers, there are notes and full references.

Although founded on US research and culture – including an interesting account of the development of the movie and television ratings systems there – the book is definitely recommended to parents and professionals in other parts of the world, as well, as the information it presents on children's fright reactions rests on child psychology, which in most respects is valid across borders.

Predictable Critique of Effects Studies

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Review of Martin Barker & Julian Petley (Eds.) ***Ill Effects. The media/violence debate.*** *London, Routledge, 1997.*

Since the late 1920s, an enormous amount of research has been done on the effects of moving images. Traditionally, this research has been carried out by social scientists on the premise that media and media use are problematic, should be mapped out and resolved. In spite of critique for reductionism raised already from the start, this kind of mostly quantitative research was dominant for a long time.

DURING THE LAST 20 YEARS, this tradition has become increasingly questioned. Earlier research results have been disqualified, both on methodological grounds and because their theoretical premises have been said to rest on invalid presuppositions. This is also how several authors argue in *Ill effects*.

The book is said to have been written in reaction to a report on the media's power to influence, by the English child psychologist Elisabeth Newson, in the after-math of the tragic incident in Liverpool, where two ten-year-old boys beat two-year-old James Bulgar to death. The report blamed the media and was used as an argument for sharpening restrictions on the video market in England.

For those who have read Barker's and others' earlier contributions to the debate, *Ill Effects* brings few new arguments.

Firstly, we find a critical evaluation of the Newson report (by Barker himself), where its arguments are deconstructed; secondly, several articles critically evaluate effects research generally (by, e.g., Buckingham, Holland, Murdock, Rowland and Vine). However, these critiques are based on the same premises as the research being criticised. By questioning research design, framing of questions and methodological choices, the authors try to invalidate earlier results. This approach put the authors in a defensive position, from which almost all must begin by stating that they do not deny the possibility of media effects. However, *all* similar research can be questioned on these grounds, since there is no one method that can determine the "true" relation between media violence and any possible effect.

For those aiming to deconstruct earlier research results, there are, thus, endless possibilities at hand. But the problem is that such an approach can not exclude the possibility of there being effects, since this is also impossible to "prove" using these methods. If we are to reach an agreement on what the effects of media are, we must look beyond such reasoning. Therefore, it is somewhat depressing to find this question debated in the same way, with the same arguments, year in and year out, without some resolution.

However, two sections of the book are different. One is Mark Kermode's contribution "I was a teenage horror fan", which is a personal account by a media user that has a preference for, and has seen large amounts of, the films that the debate revolves around. Usually, the discussion tends to focus on questions of principle (freedom of speech, censorship, etc.), whereas details such as the narratives or aesthetics of the films, or in which social settings they are consumed – as in this contribution – tend to be ignored.

The second section that distinguishes *Ill effects* from similar books is the last chapter. Here researchers report on their contacts with media when making results public. This should make depressing reading for journalists – at least for those seeking to inform readers, viewers or listeners about knowledge gained from scientific research. Without blaming all journalists for being dishonest in this respect, the authors provide several examples of how heavily slanted news articles and interviews reformulate research results into a prefabricated discourse that is then presented to the audience.

This section comes close to the question that I find most interesting: What makes the media reiterate the same discourse related to every act of violence in society, seemingly unaware of those who object to simplified explanations in which fictional violence leads to aggression and antisocial behaviour? And what makes the audience, we who pay to read, listen and watch these news reports, continue to do so, in spite of the obvious discrepancy between what the research results tell us, and what especially the printed media in their eagerness to blame the visual media tell us? In short, what makes it so enticing to fantasise about the power of the media, and revel in apocalyptic visions about the seduction of the young and the degeneration of society?

WHAT SEEMS TO BE LACKING in the debate – besides a general historical awareness among the debating agents – is a reflexivity among journalists about their own role in this discursive exchange, and about how their working conditions (short-term deadlines; adjustment of the narrative to spatial frames) affect the way they report. The fact that the journalistic angle on the correlation between violent acts and consumption of fictional violence has produced embarrassingly similar patterns over the years is clear from existing studies. I look forward to research that seriously tries to discuss why this is so.

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Lack of Children's Radio in Australia

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In the Communications Law Centre[1] *Children's Radio for Australia* project[2] we wanted to answer one particular question: *Why is it that among the cacophony of radio offered to Australians, there is almost nothing directed at children?* The project was completed in 1994, but the Centre has continued to follow the issue and found that little has changed in the ensuing four years – there are still only a handful of children's programs available.

Australians aged 12 and under make up 18.6 percent of a total population served by 407 commercial, public and community radio stations. In all those hours of talk and music, there is little more than intermittent efforts for children on a few community stations and on ethnic language programs produced by the Special Broadcasting Service. There are no programs for children on commercial radio and only one short program which commenced in 1998 broadcast by the publicly owned Australian Broadcasting Corporation, despite formal media policy gravely asserting the importance of children.

Social change requires large numbers of children to spend an increasing amount of time being ferried in cars as one- or two-parent families juggle paid work and child care. Almost every vehicle has a radio, but no programs for the child passengers.

Increasingly modern society laments the amount of time children spend with television and the adverse effects which too much television may have on kids. Radio, by contrast, may encourage listening skills, the imaginative faculty, self-confidence and interactivity, but not the sometimes mind numbing passivity of television.

OUR STUDY FOUND that children's radio was thriving in a variety of First and Third World countries. The range of potential programming is immense. The importance of involvement by children in the radio produced for them is a recurring theme. In developing countries it is used to send important health messages to populations with little infrastructure and low literacy rates. In regions such as these radio is by far the dominant medium.

Radio is an unsurpassed medium for spreading language skills. It has become an important element in Australia enmeshing itself further into Asia through the broadcasting of Radio Australia (despite recent funding cuts). That process will be measured in generations, and can start with the newest generation. The educational potential of radio is understood because in pre-television years it was explored. The potential remains to be rediscovered.

Less recognised is the commercial potential of children's radio. Children exercise considerable purchasing power, in their own right and through their influence on household buying choices. Easy compatibility exists between the vast children's book market and radio. In the multimedia age, neglect of the aural element of multimedia products, of which radio is a precursor, may cost Australia dearly. The nexus between radio airplay and selling recorded music is a foundation of adult radio, but neglected in relation to children, thousands of whom consume music and, unlike adults, are actively engaged in learning an instrument, or singing, or dance.

Children are a special audience whose vulnerability creates special responsibilities. The ethics of children's radio require sustained attention.

DIGITAL TELEVISION BROADCASTING and digital radio broadcasting are planned to commence in Australia after the year 2000. The broadcasting capacity of television will have the potential to expand five times and the potential for talk radio could expand up to 30 times and CD quality sound up to five times. Our 407 radio stations will have the capacity to become over 12,000 separate services, or at minimum over 2,000. The digital world offers scope for so much new innovative radio programming. However, after 5-10 years of dual analogue/digital broadcasting the existing analogue receivers will no longer be of use. Digital broadcasting will offer the potential for whole stations for children if managements agree, but with initial prices for the new receivers estimated to be between $1,000-1,500, less advantaged children may once again be left behind in a time of change.

Children deserve the best and most diverse media we can provide them with. Quality radio services are an essential ingredient in their media diet.

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Note

1. The *Communications Law Centre* is a public interest research, teaching and public education centre, specialising in media and communications law and policy. It seeks to integrate these different activities to develop new ways of looking at communications issues and new solutions to the public policy questions they raise. The Centre was established in Sydney in 1988 and in Melbourne in 1990. It is affiliated with the University of New South Wales and with the Victoria University of Technology.

2. Bruce Shearer (1994) *Children's Radio for Australia*. Melbourne, Communications Law Centre.

Local Children's Television Disappearing in the U.S.

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Children's television in the United States began in the late 1940s when local television station personnel played the role of clown, story teller, or magician to fill hours on this new medium and attract an audience to "radio with pictures". Once television was established, the national television broadcasting networks (ABC, CBS, NBC) took over both children's and adult programming. However, there has always been the spirit of those early telecasts. Although local programs vary in quality, as do national programs, the strength of local programming lies in its "uniqueness". These shows rely on an audience of local children or regional characters that can give children a sense of ownership or accessibility not experienced with the generic story lines or characters of national productions.

BY THE LATE 1950s television became a national institution; consequently, it became cost-effective for stations to rely on network-distributed programming though some local children's programs have coexisted with the network's Saturday morning cartoons.

In addition to the introduction of nationally-distributed children's programming, other political and economic changes have altered the landscape of local children's television. The first of these was the result of regulation from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that abolished the practice of host-selling. Often the talent on local children's shows would be responsible for doing commercial advertisements for the program sponsor. In the 1970s, the FCC said this would no longer be an accepted practice. Many local stations took this as an opportunity to replace these children's shows with adult fare.

THE 1980s brought economic challenges to both the networks and the local broadcast stations with increased competition from independent television stations (broadcast stations not affiliated with the networks), cable distribution systems (Disney, Nickelodeon), and a new youth-oriented network (Fox). This increased the number of hours of programming from slightly more than 40 hours in the 1970s to almost 300 hours in 1990 – all but a few were nationally-distributed programs. Local broadcasting was lost to the expedience of industry economics.

THE 1990s brought another change to children's television programming, one that some hoped would encourage localism or at least open a space for more creative alternatives to the current situation. After a long and difficult battle, the United States Congress passed the *Children's Television Act* of 1990 (CTA) mandating television broadcasters[1] to meet the educational/informational and developmental needs of the child audience, leaving the FCC to determine the guidelines to be used when carrying out this mandate.

After a number of false starts, the FCC established this Three-hour Rule. Beginning in Fall 1997, whenever a broadcast station's license is to be renewed, the station must demonstrate that it has served the child audience by carrying an average of three hours of educational or informational programming a week, between the hours of 7am and 10pm, targeted to children aged 16 and under. On paper this is a good thing. However, it is interesting to examine the way some stations have complied with this ruling and, like the 1970s Host-Selling regulation, used it to replace the limited local produced programs still being telecast. It appears that the few stations continuing to produce local shows are either replacing them with nationally-distributed programming that is "FCC friendly" or have circumvented the intent of the law. Rather than programs for a young audience with limited buying power,[2] it appears that stations are attempting to attract the older end of the age-requirement – 12 to 16 who are more influential as a consumer market – with low budget news or talk shows.

A STUDY of local children's programming[3] demonstrates these shifts from locally-produced to nationally-distributed programming. In 1989, a survey was sent to all commercial broadcast stations in the United States. Of the more than 900 stations in the U.S. about 550 responded; 100 of these stations did some local programming at that time. We identified 35 of these stations as having a long-term commitment to local children's programming. These 35 stations had all been producing local children's shows for more than 25 years. Round one of the data collection in 1989, just before the *Children's Television Act*, found that they all were still producing regularly-scheduled local children's programs. Round two was conducted in 1991, one year after the CTA, and found that 21 of the 35 stations (60 percent) were still doing locally-produced children's programs.

In Summer 1997, just before the Three-hour Rule went into effect, we returned to the 35 stations and found that 16 of these stations (46 percent) continued their commitment to children's locally-produced programming. Unfortunately, when these 35 stations were asked how they intended to meet the requirements of the Three-hour Rule, only seven said they would do so with locally-produced programs and most of those were to be targeted to the 12-16 year old market. Others stated they planned to

use network or nationally-syndicated programming to fulfill the Rule requirements.

It would appear that the spirit of localism, bestowed by the early days of television, is now merely a ghost.

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Notes

1. It is only broadcasters, using the public airwaves, that are compelled to meet the requirements of the Children's Television Act. Cable systems and premium channels are not obligated.

2. U.S. advertising-supported television demands an audience of consumers.

3. Norma Pecora & Kathleen Fox (1997) "Best Intentions Gone Awry: Regulatory Impact on Local Children's Programming". Paper submitted to the Management Division Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, April 1997.
For a more complete discussion of the U.S. children's television industry, see Norma Pecora (1997) *The Business of Children's Entertainment*. New York, Guilford Press, 1997.

U.S. Program Quality Not Improved

Since 1996, researchers at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, University of Pennsylvania, USA, have conducted an annual census of the broadcast and cable programming available for children in the Philadelphia urban area.[1]

By the Center's standards of quality – inclusion of clear and salient educational lessons and exclusion of excessive violence – 36.4 percent of the children's programs in 1998 could be considered "high quality" (down 3 percent from 1997), 27.3 percent are "moderate quality" (up 4 percent from 1997) and a disappointing 36.3 percent are "low quality" (similar to 1997).

U.S. REGULATIONS introduced in 1996 and 1997 are designed to provide parents with more information to be able to guide their children's viewing: 1) rating programs on-screen because of violence, sex, harsh language, etc., 2) labeling on-screen the programs that the commercial broadcasters consider to be educational and informational (E/I) for children, and 3) the "Three-hour Rule", which mandates that commercial broadcasters air at least three hours a week of E/I programming for children between 7am and 10pm.

The researchers found that many programs do not contain appropriate labels of violent content. For example, in 1998 only 25 percent of programs that contained "a lot" of violence (intentional and malicious acts of violence in three or more scenes) carried the "FV" (fantasy violence) warning.

Under the researchers' criteria for educational strength – in which lessons are clear, well-integrated, involving and applicable to children's lives – 28.6 percent of the E/I shows are considered "highly educational", 45.7 percent are "moderately educational" and 25.7 percent are "minimally educational". Parents who want to avoid problematic content such as violence, sexual innuendo and bad language, and seek programs that are educational and diverse, can count on the public channel PBS.

IN ADDITION, THE CENTER has asked an institute to carry out a yearly national poll of parents' and children's use and opinions of television programming. In 1998, telephone interviews were conducted with a random digit dialing sample of 1,208 parents of children 2-17, and 300 of their children aged 10-17, in homes with television. Afterwards the sample was weighted according to official statistics.[2]

Parents' opinion of the quality of television available for children has remained low. In each of the three years, only 16 percent of parents of children 2-17 reported "mainly" or "very positive" opinions about the quality of television for their children. About three in ten each year held a "mainly" or "very negative" opinion of television for children. The parents are most likely to cite PBS as a source for "good programs". (In 1998, 48 percent cited PBS, 37.7 percent cited cable, and 8.8 percent cited the commercial broadcasters.)

Just over one in ten parents and one quarter of 10-17-year-olds believe there are "a lot" of good programs for kids.

40.7 percent of the parents said they were using the ratings to direct their child's viewing. Of the 10-17-year-olds, nearly one in three said they did take the ratings into consideration when choosing shows.

However, only 3.4 percent of the parents report using the E/I designation. Compared to 1997, more parents said knowing a program was labeled E/I would *make no difference* in their child's likelihood of viewing the program. Among 10-17-year-olds, there was a similar increase that knowing a show was labeled E/I would make no difference in their likelihood of viewing it.

A THIRD SEPARATE STUDY dealt with media used by Latino American preschoolers. Interviews were conducted with 128 English and Spanish speaking mothers of 2-5-year-olds in Northern California at four community center sites, where preschoolers of parents of low- and middle-income families attend day care or classes. Furthermore, a content analysis was performed of television program and non-program content in and around the 30 highest ranked programs for preschool children.[3]

The mothers estimated that these Latino American preschoolers watched, on average, 15.2 hours of television per week. On television's benefits, the majority of the mothers felt that "watching TV improves the language skills of preschool children". On television's negative effects, more than half agreed that "TV is too violent" and that "TV teaches bad habits". Around 40 per-cent agreed that "TV makes children more aggressive" and that "TV hurts school performance".

Latino Americans rarely appear in the television conten' most often seen by preschool children. Of 185 characters featured, 6 were identified as Latino Americans. Of the 584 non-program content items, only 6 percent feature at least one Latino American character. Also, fewer than half of the mothers thought that "TV teaches about the majority culture" and that "TV teaches about one's own culture".

Notes

Sources published by the Annenberg Public Policy Center in 1998 and available on the web site: http://www.asc.upenn.edu/appc

1. Amy B. Jordan et al.: *1998 State of Children's Television Report: Programming for Children over Broadcast and Cable Television.*

2. *Television in the Home 1998. The Third Annual National Survey of Parents and Children.* Analysis by Jeffrey D. Stanger.

3. Dina L.G. Borzekowski & Alvin F. Poussaint: *Latino American Preschoolers and the Media.*

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Less Domestically Produced Children's TV in Europe

What amount of children's TV programming is being provided by European public broadcasters? What is the proportion of domestically made children's programmes? Has the situation changed during the first half of the 90's? The answers are found in a research report from 1997 by Blumler and Biltereyst.[1]

A questionnaire addressing the situation in 1995 was sent to the 45 heads of the children's programming departments of all public broadcasters belonging to the European Broadcasting Union (EBU). 55 percent answered, thus 25 organisations in 17 countries providing programmes for children on a total of 39 channels.

The present data can be compared with the results of an earlier survey dealing with the provision of children's television in 1991 and 1993. This covered 35 television channels of 22 broadcasters, about half of which also participated in the new study.

THE RESEARCH SHOWS: Children's television amounts on average to 9.5 percent of European public broadcasters' overall programming output.

For the 17 channels contributing data at each time point, the average amount of broadcasting time for children increased by 29 percent from 1991 to 1995, which is almost identical to the growth in the public broadcasters' overall broadcasting time.

However, the amount of domestically produced children's programming declined, absolutely and relatively, from 1991 to 1995, whereas there was a great increase in imports. In 1995, only 37 percent of children's programming on average was domestically produced and 62 percent consisted of imports. Of the imports, about half were from the U.S.

Deregulation policies and increased competition from commercial channels have also led to rejigged and lightened schedules and formats. For example, in 1995, animation constituted on average 40 percent of total children's programming output, ranging from less than 20 percent to more than 80 percent among various European public broadcasting channels.

All these tendencies in children's programming are stronger among public broadcasters with low public funding and a great dependence on advertising and sponsorship.

Generally, the data indicate a bi-polarisation of children's programming into domestic and – even more – U.S. material, as well as more and more animated programmes. This does not necessarily mean that children's programmes are becoming poorer, but does indicate decreased diversity and range in children's programming over time – diversity being one of the basic goals of public service television.

Not only the channel's type of financing, but also cultural region plays a role. The Nordic countries were "purest" in their preservation of the public service model, whereas tendencies towards more US imports and animation were most apparent for many Romance (French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish) channels. Anglo-German public providers were situated in between. In 1995, the East European channels were clearly in a phase of transition.

Note

1. Jay G. Blumler & Daniel Biltereyst (1997) *The Integrity and Erosion of Public Television for Children. A pan-European survey.* A monograph of research sponsored by the Center for Media Education (Washington, D.C.), the Broadcasting Standards Commission (UK), The European Institute for the Media (Dusseldorf, Germany), and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU).

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AGORA '98

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The annual children's media event AGORA, arranged by the European Children's Television Centre (E.C.T.C.), took place on June 26-30, 1998, in Paphos, Cyprus. Strengthening business relations, exploring new methods of distribution and co-production, forging new partnerships, introducing professionals to the world of new technologies, bringing Mediterranean, Balkan and Middle East countries closer to the international market, promoting media education, and presenting research on children and television were main headlines during AGORA '98. There were programme exchanges, workshops, screenings, seminars, festivals and programme sales. The 250 participants from many parts of the world consisted of television professionals on all levels, as well as academics, researchers and media literacy experts.

Included was also preparatory brain-storming for the "Third World Summit on Media for Children" which will be hosted by E.C.T.C. in Athens, Greece, in 2001. It was decided that AGORA '99 and AGORA 2000 will be additional forums for preparation of the Summit, besides an on-line service in which everyone may participate.

Preceding AGORA '98, was a new audio-visual summer school, "Summer Talks". The participants were 24 invited teenagers 12-16 years old from fourteen European countries. "Summer Talks" will be repeated and extended – the aim is to create a meeting place for youngsters and professionals from the audio-visual industry.

Also new was the "Kids for Kids Video Festival", this first time including 57 films produced by children from sixteen European countries and the U.S.: documentaries, fiction, animation. The AGORA participants were shown a few of them. The idea is that children from all over the world will be able to take part in this festival in the future.

Arab-Mediterranean Network for Children's TV

One of several interesting happenings at AGORA '98 was the Arab participants' decision to create on this occasion a non-governmental, non-profit organisation – an Arab-Mediterranean network called "Enfants de demain" (Children of Tomorrow) – with the goal of facilitating co-operation, production and exchange of TV programmes for children, as well as research and media education related to children, young people and television. The Arab representatives at AGORA explained that many problems connected with television in their countries are due to the great amount of imports and satellites, but that many problems are also internal; the domestic productions are few, of inferior quality, and children and young people themselves are not represented on television. Below, the Algerian participant at AGORA presents some of his reflections on this media situation.

Image and Violence – A Questionable Relationship

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Many generations of Maghreban[1)] children and teenagers are culturally "manufactured" with and by television. A culture – essentially transnational – promoting sex, violence and money worship, came to bridge the gaps left by the lack of national sounds and images.

The question that comes to mind is as follows: Do these apparently harmless messages not constitute a potential and lasting danger for the young people's minds?

It is admitted that the Maghreban youth's aspirations are no longer the same as those prevailing in the traditional society. Long ago, the children's world was organised around two social institutions: family and school. Nowadays, the greatest part of education, of world discoveries and entertainment, revolves around the TV screen, which has become a factor of integration and socialisation.

While some parents consider TV to be a mere source of entertainment, others accuse it of alienating the mind. The latter not only render it responsible for school failures, but they also regard it to be the cause of all the problems, as far as psychological development and social integration are concerned.

However, if it is the case that excessive consumption of anachronistic films involves risks for the development

of the consciousness, and if some broadcasting leads to a negative perception of the world, we must keep prejudices apart. The pernicious effects of the sounds and images exist only if nothing is proposed to remedy them. For example, why do educational institutions ignore audio-visual means? Why is nothing done to develop auditory and visual intelligence?

All TV trials with the aim of making the young more critical when facing audio-visual messages have failed. School programmes were not satisfactory.

In our part of the world, more than 50 percent of the inhabitants are less than 30 years old. However, television produced for or by them is still lacking.

The questions are still relevant, especially nowadays with the important development of new technologies, and of the extranational broadcast supply.

For the young Maghrebans, who move from one foreign channel to another, Europe appears as a model of peace and freedom, and America as an El Dorado. Their home country is rejected.

The conflict of values between generations gets deeper and is more frequent. Half-way between tradition and modernity, the young Maghreban feels deprived.

Thus, to the conflict of values and that of culture is added the problem of cultural malfunction, which is a very important and serious concern. This proves that the cruel world leaves the young more and more isolated, and moving towards a quite uncertain future.

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Note

1. Maghreb = (Arabic) the land of the sunset; name for the North-African countries of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, sometimes also Libya (editor's note).

ABU Exchange of Children's Programmes

NOBUHIRO SATO
Director, Programme Department
ABU Secretariat

The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) is a professional association of broadcasting organisations. It has no political or commercial aims, and was established to assist in the development of radio and television in Asia and the Pacific. The ABU's Children's TV Programme Item-Exchange Meeting occurs once a year in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

ABU and the European Broadcasting Union are to establish closer ties in the exchange of television programmes for children. The decision to step up links in this important field was taken at the 1998 ABU Children's TV Programme Item-Exchange Meeting on August 4-7.

As a first step, some of the children's programmes offered for exchange at the meeting were sent to the EBU's youth programme committee, along with a report of the meeting. The committee met in November, 1998.

In addition, the ABU will send delegates to next year's EBU children's programme exchange meeting, provided funding for this can be obtained. In return, the ABU will invite EBU members to its programme exchange meeting next year.

The four-day meeting in Kuala Lumpur brought together 24 producers from 21 ABU member organisations, as well as observers from five non-members. The good turnout was made possible by generous support from the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) of Germany and the Hoso-Bunka Foundation of Japan.

Opening the meeting, the Secretary-General, Hugh Leonard, said too many TV programmes for children were badly made. He urged participants to take full advantage of the opportunity to exchange ideas and learn from one another.

The meeting devoted two days to viewing and discussing a total of 91 items brought by delegates and observers. Members who brought four items eligible for exchange were able to take as many items as they wished from among those offered by others.

The items were divided into four categories: Children's stories; How things are made; Nature/ Animals; and Open Category. The categories for 1999 will remain the same.

A highlight of the meeting was a demonstration by the ABU's Information Systems Manager, Clemens Kraut, of a plan to set up a page on the ABU web site for programme exchange and sales. Delegates gave the go-ahead for the page to be launched in the coming year.

They also asked the Secretariat to consider extending next year's meeting to five days and holding a children's programme workshop in conjunction with it.

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Note

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Philippines Children's Television Foundation

PCTVF – The Philippine Children's Television Foundation, Inc. – is an independent, non-profit organization, formed in 1984 by the team that worked on the Philippine *Sesame Street* Project, a co-production with the Children's Television Workshop (CTW, New York).

The first project of PCTVF was to produce a television program for pre-school children that would supplement their education and at the same time make the children appreciative of their culture and heritage – the show *Batibot* was born. Thirteen years later, PCTVF continues to produce *Batibot*, but the Foundation's mission has now broadened to varied forms of mass media – television, radio, print and video production – to enhance children's education and promote and protect children's interests.

AS A PIONEER in educational television and radio within a commercial broadcast industry, PCTVF has relied on program development processes that ensure age-appropriate content and formats. PCTVF was the first independent production organization in the country with a full-time research team. The primary function of the team has been to represent the audience – the children – and help the writers and production staff to better understand children's interests and needs. There is a constant interchange between the writers, researchers, and educators throughout the process of producing programs.

The research team performs its research and workshops with children in schools, day care centers, and communities. PCTVF also involves children in developing children's programs. In the preparation for the Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media (1996) children sent letters to express their views about media and their relation to it. PCTVF was a member of the Regional Organizing Committee and National Steering Committee of the Summit. (For more information on the Asian Summit, see *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, Vol 1, No 1-2, 1997.)

IN THE PAST YEARS, PCTVF has intensified its work with students from colleges and universities who join PCTVF for a few weeks or a few months depending on their training needs. Technical and production staff members work with them throughout the apprenticeship program. PCTVF serves as a training ground for young people who eventually branch out to other production companies or television networks in the Philippines.

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Qingdao Children's TV Development Council, China

QINGDAO CHILDREN'S TV Development Council in China is a local non-governmental organisation which works with the development of children's TV and other media. It is comprised of directors, producers and others working in television, as well as people at both local and international levels who are concerned with and supportive of children's issues.

THE WORK OF OUR ORGANISATION is briefly summarised below.

We are promoting contact, exchange and co-operation with domestic and foreign colleagues; importing commercial and non-commercial children's TV programmes for our children; and introducing our best children's programmes to foreign countries. We have also taken or sent our programmes to a number of film festivals and special international children's activities. In 1997, *Our Aspiration*, produced by us for the International Children's Day of Broadcasting, was honoured with an Emmy nomination from UNICEF.

We are attaching great importance to children's participation in the media. We often hold various activities in which children are involved to different degrees as, e.g., hosts, participants or performers. A troop named "Xiao Bai Fan Art Ensemble" is made up of young musicians, dancers and singers that serve the Qingdao TV Station and play an important role in children's programmes. In addition, we have trained many young actors and actresses who have done well in many domestic TV series or films. Another group called "Kacha Young Journalists" is composed of children who are fond of photography. They take shots which children are interested in or concerned with in the city and its suburbs, factories and villages, etc. Their pictures are often shown on QDTV News.

Also, we are raising funds to invest in producing educational and entertaining programmes for children or new children's series, buying excellent children's programmes and other media from foreign countries as well as holding discussion on children's issues.

QINGDAO CHILDREN'S TV Development Council is a member of CIFEJ (Centre of Films for Children and Young People) and has established close relationships with many media organisations both at home and abroad. Co-operation and exchange are cordially welcome. Together with colleagues all over the world, we intend to try our best to create a space – a happy space – for children.

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Journalism 2000 – Child Rights and the Media

The international conference *Journalism 2000: Child Rights and the Media*, arranged by The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), was held on May 2nd, 1998, in Recife, Brazil. The conference was attended by more than 150 representatives of journalists' organisations from over 70 countries.

Prior to the conference the IFJ Child Rights project undertook a world-wide survey of national and international standards for journalists reporting on children's issues. On the basis of the survey and discussions with journalist representatives, relevant NGOs and UN agencies, the IFJ prepared a set of guidelines.

After the conference speeches, many participants talked about their own experience in covering children. Several participants proposed amendments to the guidelines which were included in the final version. It was further proposed that media should have a child rights event calendar planning for coverage of reports to the UN by national governments, ILO (International Labour Organization) meetings and other events which could be used to highlight the rights of children.

The meeting resulted in the adoption of the IFJ *Child Rights and the Media: Guidelines for Journalists* (see below), as a draft for debate and development among the world's journalists – a process which is expected to take three years. It was agreed that the IFJ should organise regional follow-up meetings to discuss the guidelines and that a review conference should be organised in 1999.

WITH THE LAUNCH OF THE GUIDELINES, and the world-wide survey of codes of conduct, the IFJ has produced materials assisting both media professionals and agencies concerned with the promotion of children's rights. In the subsequent phases of the Child Rights project the IFJ will focus on regional discussion and practical activities in the areas of journalism training, newsroom organisation and production of materials.

Viewpoints and comments are welcome, please contact:
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CHILD RIGHTS AND THE MEDIA: GUIDELINES FOR JOURNALISTS

Preamble

Informed, sensitive and professional journalism is a key element in any media strategy for improving the quality of reporting concerning human rights and society. The daily challenge to journalists and media organisations is particularly felt in coverage of children and their rights.

Although the human rights of children have only recently been defined in international law, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is already so widely supported that it will shortly become the first universal law of humankind.

To do their job of informing the public effectively, journalists must be fully aware of the need to protect children and to enhance their rights without in any way damaging freedom of expression or interfering with the fabric of journalistic independence. Journalists must also be provided with training to achieve high ethical standards.

The following guidelines for journalists have been drawn up by the International Federation of Journalists on the basis of an extensive survey of codes of conduct and standards already in force across the world.

The purpose of this draft is to raise media awareness of children's rights issues and to stimulate debate among media professionals about the value of a common approach which will reinforce journalistic standards and contribute to the protections and enhancement of children's rights.

(*Continuing on next page*)

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GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES FOR REPORTING ON ISSUES INVOLVING CHILDREN

All journalists and media professionals have a duty to maintain the highest ethical and professional standards and should promote within the industry the widest possible dissemination of information about the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and its implications for the exercise of independent journalism.

Media organisations should regard violation of the rights of children and issues related to children's safety, privacy, security, their education, health and social welfare and all forms of exploitation as important questions for investigations and public debate. Children have an absolute right to privacy, the only exceptions being those explicitly set out in these guidelines.

Journalistic activity which touches on the lives and welfare of children should always be carried out with appreciation of the vulnerable situation of children.

Journalists and media organisations shall strive to maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct in reporting children's affairs and, in particular, they shall

1. **strive** for standards of excellence in terms of accuracy and sensitivity when reporting on issues involving children;
2. **avoid** programming and publication of images which intrude upon the media space of children with information which is damaging to them;
3. **avoid** the use of stereotypes and sensational presentation to promote journalistic material involving children;
4. **consider** carefully the consequences of publication of any material concerning children and shall minimise harm to children;
5. **guard** against visually or otherwise identifying children unless it is demonstrably in the public interest;
6. **give** children, where possible, the right of access to media to express their own opinions without inducement of any kind;
7. **ensure** independent verification of information provided by children and take special care to ensure that verification takes place without putting child informants at risk;
8. **avoid** the use of sexualised images of children;
9. **use** fair, open and straight forward methods for obtaining pictures and, where possible, obtain them with the knowledge and consent of children or a responsible adult, guardian or carer;
10. **verify** the credentials of any organisation purporting to speak for or to represent the interests of children;
11. **not** make payment to children for material involving the welfare of children or to parents or guardians of children unless it is demonstrably in the interest of the child.

Journalists should put to critical examination the reports submitted and the claims made by Governments on implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in their respective countries.

Media should not consider and report the conditions of children only as events but should continuously report the process likely to lead or leading to the occurrence of these events.

MANY THANKS TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS!

DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEXT ISSUE
OF THE NEWSLETTER IS
FEBRUARY 15, 1999

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ANDI in Brazil

ANDI – the News Agency for Children's Rights (Agência de Notícias dos Direitos da Infância), is a non-governmental, non-profit Brazilian organization founded in 1992. Its main objective is to contribute to the formation of a new journalistic approach that would focus on and investigate, always from a children's rights perspective, the situation of Brazilian children and young adults who are at risk.

ANDI keeps a continuous dialogue with media organizations in Brazil by offering them relevant suggestions for news stories, by denouncing cases of violence or abuse, and by showing them successful social experiments.

Every six months, ANDI publishes its research *Childhood in the Media*, addressing the major themes that newspapers in Brazil have covered. This research gives newspapers a perspective on their work in children's rights, and warns newspapers about neglect and misconception.

The *Clippings Analysis* is distributed weekly to subscribers. It consists of a summary of the major stories published by newspapers and magazines, and a summary of the content of television newscasts.

ONE OF ANDI'S PRIORITIES is to increase the visibility of social projects of juvenile initiative. For this purpose, close ties are maintained with professionals working with television programs, newspapers and magazines targeted at young readers. ANDI is also involved in educating journalist students.

Non-governmental organizations that work for the protection of children's rights are ANDI's most important source of inspiration. Permanent contact is maintained to encourage the organizations' relationship with the media, and to strengthen the ties between social activists and journalists.

The Abrinq Foundation for the Rights of the Children awarded ANDI the "1996 Children's Award". The same year, ANDI was invited to present the first "Esso Journalism Prize for Childhood and Adolescence" – a special category created at ANDI's suggestion as a tribute to UNICEF's 50th anniversary.

In recognition to the significant role played by journalists in the defense of children's rights, ANDI and the Abrinq Foundation have created an informal social mobilization network, by selecting journalists for the title of "Friend of Children". In 1997, ANDI recognized journalists from various regions of Brazil with the title.

In 1996, ANDI created the "Cinema for Childhood Award". The nominees are full or short length films taking part in the Festival de Brasília of the Brazilian Film Industry.

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TVer in Brazil

THE WORD "TVer" is composed of TV and the Portuguese "ver" (to see, to watch). Thus, TVer means "watching TV", in the sense of "keeping an eye on it". It was Dr. Marta Suplicy – a Federal Deputy for the State of São Paulo – who got the idea of creating TVer after having heard – personally and through mail – complaints from thousands of people about the quality of Brazilian TV programmes. In June 1997, Dr. Suplicy invited a group of professionals: psychologists, psychoanalysts, doctors, journalists, pedagogues, philosophers, writers, lawyers and judges. The main objective of this group – TVer – was to create a public space where Brazilian citizens could debate, analyse and, consequently, participate in visual media, mainly television. TVer proposes to carry on discussions on public and social responsibility in relation to TV contents. Since (also commercial) TV is public property, we understand that viewers and citizens do have the right to demand through their elected representatives improved programming quality.

DISCUSSING THE RESPONSIBILITY of TV in Brazil also means analysing the role of TV in child-adolescent development. According to TVer, any attempt to create a sense of citizenship – discussing violence, pregnancy in adolescence, sexual and work exploitation of children, disrespect for women, discrimination of any kind (colour, religion, sexual minorities, etc.) – must take TV participation into consideration. This is of vital importance, as children sometimes spend more than 3 hours daily in front of TV, that is, in some cases about the same amount of time they spend at school.

IN AUGUST 1998, TVer became a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO). Such a political decision was taken in order to implement a strategy of social responsibility, as well as to create what TVer calls "The Rights of the Viewer". As an NGO, TVer can more easily express its members' opinions, whenever Brazilian citizens feel that a television broadcast, or a particular subject, may be harmful. However, TVer does not intend to engage in "TV criticism" – that is efficiently done by other means of communication. It is also important to point out that TVer was *not* created to defend censorship of any kind.

TVer hopes to stimulate the creation of many similar groups around Brazil – and the world – to discuss television and "The Rights of the Viewer". May this contribute to ending the present monologue between TV and society!

Dr. Paulo Roberto Ceccarelli
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Web site: http://database.tver.org.br/index.asp
(in Portuguese, soon also in English)

Forum for Citizens' Television & Media, Japan

THE FORUM FOR CITIZENS' TELEVISION & MEDIA was founded in 1977 by our present representative Midori Suzuki, along with supporting members, such as media researchers and citizens concerned with issues and problems related to children's media environment. At the beginning, FCT stood for the Forum for Children's Television. As members' interests successively expanded to gender issues, the aged, the disabled, and foreigners, FCT was renamed to the Forum for Citizens' Television in 1992. In 1998, we added "& media", because television cannot be well understood without considering the other media – comics, computer games, videos, the Internet, etc. – that surround us today.

FCT strives to promote the idea that media should not be solely in the hands of industry, but that all citizens should have access to and influence over the media. Our aims and activities are carried out using a "critical media literacy" approach, and they are based on the concept of people's right to communicate.

ONE MAJOR ACTIVITY of FCT is to publish our newsletter *Gazette* three times a year, and to report on empirical research surveys about the state of the media. This is necessary in order to provide the media with fact-based critical reviews and opinions about them. Since 1980, FCT has compiled and published some 20 reports in Japanese. Among these are, *Television and the Human Rights of Children* (1986), *How is TV Commercialized?* (1988), *Foreigners and Foreign Matters Depicted on Television and the Internationalization of Japan* (1991), *Media and Women's Right to Communicate* (1994), and *Television and the Kobe-Earthquake* (1995). In 1998, FCT published the results of a newly started television monitoring project, TEMO, that analyzes various program categories using a media literacy approach.

THE OTHER MAJOR ACTIVITY of FCT is organizing local and international forums. FCT organizes an open forum three or four times a year, where anybody can attend the media literacy workshops or discuss current themes on the media. On December 13-15 1998, FCT will arrange the ANWIC (Asian Network of Women in Communication) Seminar Workshop, "Gender and Media Literacy: Deconstructing TV Commercials", inviting scholars and media activists from Taiwan and Korea. On October 16, 1998, we held a forum in Tokyo to discuss the possibility of constructing extensive codes for children's television programming. Such codes have not existed in Japan until today. Since people from the media industry also participated, we hope to produce some concrete outcomes on this issue.

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Work Group on European Youth Protection in the Media

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES in the European countries determine the ideas about what should be regarded as harmful media content concerning children and young people. Regulations, organisations, and criteria relating to youth protection in each country differ greatly and are based on different kinds of reasoning.

The Peace Research Information Unit Bonn, the German UNESCO Commission and the Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle Fernsehen (Berlin-based self-regulatory authority for German television) have set up a work group concerned with intercultural problems associated with a joint European system of youth protection in the media.

The creation of the work group was prompted by the European states' obligation to translate the new EU Council directive on television broadcasting into national law. The Work Group had its first meeting in June 1998 in Bonn, Germany.

THE AIMS OF THE WORK GROUP on European Youth Protection in the Media are:

- to offer a scholarly forum in which the intercultural problems associated with a European system of youth protection in the media may be discussed;
- to be a forum for discussions about the cultural roots of national youth-media-protection regulations and the structures that represent and promote youth protection in the European nation-states;
- to offer an opportunity of working out standpoints and lines of argument not tied to national youth protection organisations or official government positions;
- to promote European integration in the domain of youth-media-protection, on the basis of academic investigation.

Official government departments as well as youth protection organisations, media providers, and cultural and media researchers will be involved in the group, which will hold two two-days' sessions per year. The next meeting is scheduled for the end of January 1999, in the Hague, the Netherlands.

In this context, a book on the theme "Thinking about Youth: Constructions of Youth in Europe", edited by Christian Büttner, Cornelius Crans, Joachim von Gottberg and Verena Metze-Mangold is scheduled for publication in the summer of 1999. The book includes articles by authors from Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, France and Britain.

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Media Violence and Children

State of Discussion in the Czech Republic

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When Communist censorship was abolished in the Czech Republic in 1989, the pendulum swung in the opposite direction toward extreme liberalism. The new freedom of expression has been used excessively by importers of the worst of the western media production brought to our "Wild East" where everything was allowed and every attempt at public regulation was disqualified as an attack on democracy.

IN 1990, one of our best known film directors, Jiří Menzel, published an article suggesting that some kind of censorship would sooner or later be necessary in order to protect children and youth from the damaging influence of media. However, the classical liberal standpoint that every prohibition, however useful it may seem, is a dangerous step in the wrong direction, prevailed. Even now, nine years after 1989, the public is allergic to the word "censorship" if used in the positive sense – although, as a matter of fact, the Czech legislation concerning pornography, issued soon after Menzel's appeal and similar to that of most European democracies, implies the principle of censorship.

Legislation concerning TV says that, from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., nothing is allowed on the screen that "could threaten the moral or psychological development of children". Another law, regulating accessibility of audiovisual production to the public, says that the producer or importer is obliged to determine the age level up to which individual products should not be made accessible to children. However, criteria according to which the age level should be determined are not specified.

YEAR BY YEAR, voices calling for regulation of media violence grew stronger. Thousands of citizens signed various petitions with this requirement addressed to the Parliament. In 1994, a non-profit organisation, White Circle of Safety, initiated several such petitions. One of them, originally signed by a group of writers, became extremely popular after it was fiercely attacked by a leading ideologist of liberalism, Prof. Bělohradský in a newspaper (several days before it was published). This petition was widely discussed in the media and was finally supported by approximately 90 thousand citizens.

The reaction of the Committee for Petitions of the Parliament was sluggish and, in fact, negligible. Nevertheless, the public did react. Many articles were published in newspapers and journals (including even an interview with president Havel who supported state regulation of media violence) and a number of discussions took place on TV and radio stations. Public opinion polls showed that the majority of citizens is convinced that something should be done. Also, the director of the public TV issued a codex regulating violence on the screen in a way similar to how it is done in Great Britain. Furthermore, this pressure probably encouraged the Council for Radio and Television to fine the private TV station NOVA 1.3 million crowns for starting transmission of a film containing extreme amounts of verbal obscenity before 10 p.m. (Although verbal obscenity is not violence in a strict sense, it can neither be regarded as pornography; it is clear that the Council penalised NOVA without unduly adhering to the letter of the law.)

THE FIGHT GOES ON. After the experience with the Committee for Petitions, a group of citizens created their own committee and started collecting signatures under a new petition, this time requiring quite specifically that media violence be given "treatment" equal to that already given to pornography. Personalities like a generally known Prague bishop, Václav Malý, and the president of the Criminal Senate of the Supreme Court, Zdeněk Sovák, are among the speakers for the signers. About 44 thousand citizens have already signed, most of them substantiating their attitude as an expression of responsibility based on their Christian faith.

The Senate of the Czech Republic reacted favourably. Its Committee for Petitions decided to prepare a seminar for Members of Parliament of both chambers in order to give them an opportunity to discuss the matter with experts and to consider preparation of an amendment to the existing legislation. The activists are prepared to give the course of the agenda as much publicity as possible.

There is no doubt that the public will exert considerable pressure upon those who are in charge. The outlook that the country will soon be joining the European Union is encouraging. We hope that, with respect to the standards of the European Union, protection of children from media violence will be easier to enforce.

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Queen Sofia Center for the Study of Violence

JOSÉ SANMARTÍN
Director, Queen Sofia Center

Three years ago, the Valencian Foundation of Advanced Studies organised an International Meeting on Biology and Sociology of Violence. Well-known international scholars, as well as politicians and prestigious professionals took part in it. Her Majesty the Queen of Spain closed the meeting and encouraged the organisers, Dr. Santiago Grisolía and Dr. Sanmartín to create an institution dedicated to the study of violence.

That was the origin of the Queen Sofia Centre for the Study of Violence, first and unique centre in Spain dedicated to this topic, sited in Valencia and under the Honorary Presidency of H. M. The Queen Sofia.

The main objective of the Queen Sofia Centre for the Study of Violence is to promote scientific research on violence, and arrange international meetings (symposia, seminars, courses, and conferences) with high-recognised experts from the different fields related to violence. We also promote teaching activities by *The Santiago Grisolía Chair*, to which teachers, researchers and well-known personalities from other fields (politicians, economists...) who study violence or fight against it, are appointed. Finally, it is our intention to create a documentation centre, which will make the latest publications available to specialists on aggression and violence.

WORKSHOPS. In 1997 the Queen Sofía Centre for the Study of Violence organised an international workshop on *Violence and Mass Media (I) Movies and Television*, in which scholars, as Edward Donnerstein and L.R. Huesmann, and specialists from different TV channels, as well as cinema directors from our country, took part. Some recommendations for the industry, parents, educators, and politicians, about the showing of violence in mass media and the way to fight against it were made from this Workshop.

Last May 1998, the Queen Sofia Centre for the Study of Violence started a series of symposia that, with annual periodicity, will examine the way these recommendations are echoing in the related fields. To achieve that, we invited representatives from different television companies, as well as specialists on communication and representatives from the TV Counsels, as Mr. François Hurard, Director of Programs of the Audio-visual Counsel in France.

November 2-3, 1998 the Queen Sofia Centre for the Study of Violence held its annual International Workshop in Valencia. This time it dealt with the topic of violence against children. In this workshop two important manifestations of violence against children were discussed. First and second session were dedicated to family violence. During these sessions well-known specialists from all over the world, as Joel Milner, David Wolfe, Barbara Bonner, Bruce Perry, Enrique Echeburúa and others, dealt with child physical and sexual abuse. Third and fourth session counted on Graça Machel, scholars as Kirk Felsman and James Garbarino, and presidents or founders of different NGOs defending children, as Save the Children (Charles MacCormack), Warchild (Bill Leeson), Christian Children Fund (Michelle Poulton) and UNICEF-España (Joaquín Ruiz Jiménez), who discussed the topic of children and war. We are sure that this event had a great social and scientific impact, due to the high quality of its participants, guests and attendants.

SANTIAGO GRISOLÍA LECTURES. The main purpose of the Santiago Grisolía Chair is to invite major researchers from all over the world to give lecturers about their most significant findings in the field of violence. Due to the process whereby holders are appointed and the financial remuneration awarded with it, the Chair is considered an annual prize for two of the most outstanding professional careers in the study of biology, psychology and sociology of violence. In 1998 doctor David Finkelhor, from the University of New Hampshire (USA), co-director of the Family Research Laboratory, and specialist in Child Physical and Sexual Abuse, and doctor Bruce Hoffman, from the University of St. Andrews (Scotland), director of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence, held the Chair.

OTHER ACTIVITIES. Another objective of the centre is to edit one or two publications related to each activity. So far we have already published:

Grisolía, J.S.; Sanmartín, J. (1996): *Manifiesto de Valencia sobre la Violencia*. Valencia FVEA.

Grisolía, J.S. ; Sanmartín, J.; Luján, J.L.; Grisolía, S. (1997): *Violence: From Biology to Society*. Amsterdam, Elsevier.

Sanmartín, J. (1997): *Violencia y medios de comunicación. Recomendaciones de Valencia*. Valencia. Centro Reina Sofía para el Estudio de la Violencia.

Sanmartín, J.; Grisolía, J.S.; Grisolía, S. (1998): *Violencia, televisión y cine*. Barcelona, Ariel.

FINALLY, IT IS TO BE REMARKED that year 2000 the Queen Sofia Centre for the Study of Violence will organise, in collaboration with the ISRA (International Society of Research on Aggression), its Second International Conference, which is held every four years, and that this time will deal with violence at the end of the millennium, reviewing the concept, types, forms, prevention and resolution of this worrying problem.

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International Congress on Communication and Education

KARIN STIGBRAND
Senior Lecturer, University College of Gävle

"We are rearranging the chairs on the deck of Titanic but we don't care about the ice in front of us..." With these words, *Andrew Hart*, University of Southampton, UK, opened his speech on "Communication and Education in a Global World" in São Paulo, Brazil. *"...Poverty has to be part of the agenda. If poverty is not our common reference we will get lost."* He received a warm applause.

The International Congress on Communication and Education, May 20-24, 1998, was arranged by the University of São Paulo and the World Council for Media Education (WCME), Consejo Mundial de Educación para los Medios (CMEM), a new organisation for media teachers, journalists and researchers (see below). More than 200 persons from 30 countries participated in the congress, besides some hundred Brazilian teachers and journalists invited by the city.

There was an air of solemnity when the UNESCO representative on May, 20, inaugurated the congress by speaking about the inheritance from Paulo Freire and showing a film about his work in Latin America and Africa.

THE KEY NOTE SPEECH by *Roberto Aparici*, UNED, Spain, linked to McLuhan's and Mattelart's thoughts about the consequences of media globalisation. The education systems in the world have to meet this development, he argued. The digital culture can contribute to democracy, freedom of speech and information – but there is no certainty it will. Access to Internet is not granted everywhere and the reports by Amnesty International show that in many parts of the world human rights are not acknowledged.

Critical solidarity, *Robert Ferguson*, University of London, UK, argued, should guide Media Education in the future. Only playing during the lessons becomes boring after a while – serious intentions must also be there. The world that we share with each other is worth reflecting upon.

Guillermo Orozco Gomez, University of Guadalajara, Mexico, dedicated his lecture about "a televiewing pedagogy" to a friend and colleague who was imprisoned because of taking pictures of people queuing for food. He argued against Rupert Murdoch who claims that television has nothing to do with knowledge and culture. The model for Media Education that Gomez proposed for children aged 7-12 years has three steps: first, to play television (the children furnish rooms and act as journalists, cameramen, etc.), and, second, to play with television (the children split in groups and guess, using sound or pictures, what kind of story their friends are

THE WORLD COUNCIL FOR MEDIA EDUCATION (WCME)

The aims of WMCE are:

- to promote Media Education as a form of literacy at all levels of teaching in accordance with the Declaration of Human Rights (1948).
- to develop strategies in Media Education in order to promote the formation of citizenship and democracy.
- to collaborate in the development of networks and the organisation of local, regional and international forums that promote Media Education.
- to promote forums for discussion of theory, practice and principles of Media Education.
- to promote the development of research in the field of Media Education.
- to advise politicians, educational administrators, industry and those with responsibility for the media.

WCME was initiated in La Coruña, Spain, in 1994 by *Roberto Aparici*, UNED, Spain, *Costas Criticos*, University of Natal, South Africa, *Susanne Krucsay*, Ministry of Education, Austria, *Robyn Quin*, Edith Cowan University, Australia, *Ismar de Oliveira Soares*, University of São Paulo, Brazil, and *Kathleen Tyner*, author from the U.S.

At the II World Meeting on Media Education in São Paulo, it was decided that WCME recognises both institutional and individual members. The Executive Committee will be made up of representatives from Africa, North America, Latin America, Asia, Australia/Oceania and Europe. The goal is to hold regular world meetings, to publish one news bulletin a year, and to develop projects and give advice. The Committee will meet once a year in order to analyse progress and monitor a plan of activities that will be communicated to all members of WCME.

The next World Meeting will be in Toronto, Canada, in May, 13-17, 2000, within the frame of "Summit 2000". The media teachers *Barry Duncan* and *Carolyn Wilson*, Association for Media Literacy, Ontario, and others have started the preparations. The question of language is crucial; no one language is supposed to dominate the meetings.

trying to tell). The fact that we all understand programmes and films differently is one of the insights of this exercise. The third step aims at making the children reflect upon why television channels offer different types of programmes.

Ana Graviz and *Jorge Pozo*, NIMECO, Sweden, gave a lecture in the same spirit about their work with small children.

ON MAY 21, THE THEME was "Paradigms Revisited". *Geneviève Jacquinot*, University of Paris VIII, France, called for comparative studies on teacher training and exchange of teaching materials. She is working with *Roxana Morduchowicz*, Asociación de Diarios del Interior, Argentina, to find methods for teaching poor children in the suburbs of Buenos Aires. *William Thorn*, University of Marquette, USA, reported on how Media Education can be evaluated in terms of critical thinking. He deplored that in this field, the U.S. is an underdeveloped country.

Alexander Fedorov, Taganrog State Pedagogical Institute, talked about how young people in Russia discuss and analyse film. *Pablo Ramos*, the Cuban Film Institute (ICAIC), described how children are thought to produce film and brief programmes as part of their education in Cuba.

Working with newspapers in schools seems to be common all over Latin America. There are strong organisations to promote this pedagogy, sponsored by the papers in many countries. Distance learning and the use of interactive media in education were other themes of the congress.

MAY 22 WAS DEVOTED to campaigns and social projects in schools using new technology. *Boudewijn van Velze*, University of Utrecht, described a successful drug information campaign in Dutch schools.

Juha Suoranta, University of Lapland, warned about the over-confidence in Finland and elsewhere about using Internet for learning. The expectations are naive, he said. Critical research is what is needed. The new technical possibilities do not reduce – just by their mere existence – the old problems in education.

Susanne Krucsay, Ministry of Education, Austria, spoke about the strategy in her country to strengthen Media Education in schools. Four times a year, each school receives a bulletin from the Ministry with suggestions about teaching material and discussion and theory in the field.

The rights for minorities, as well as respect for different cultures in media contexts, were also on the agenda. So were production of teaching materials and video conferences as a part of education.

Karin Stigbrand, University College of Gävle, reported on the experiences of Media Education in Sweden. Besides giving a short historic background to the present problems, Media Education was analysed in relation to media development and cultural policy.

Elise Seip Tönnessen, the teacher training college in Kristiansand, talked about the reception of *Sesame Street* among Norwegian children. She stressed that a prerequisite for a fruitful Media Education is that the teacher is safe in her/his cultural identity and is familiar with the pupils' conditions.

ON MAY 23, THE PARTICIPANTS were reminded by *Alejandro Alfonso*, representative of UNESCO in Latin America, that fifty years have passed since the Declaration of Human Rights was accepted, and that Media Education everywhere should be *education for citizenship*.

João Jordão Sabão, Faculty of Communication in Maputo, gave an overview of the media development in Mozambique in relation to different literacy projects. *Kedar Khadka* presented the media structure and the economy in Nepal before he gave a speech on his main subject, international communication and Nepalese Virtual Communities.

The conflict between programmes from commercial TV stations and the supply of educational programmes was discussed in many working groups. So was the question of violence in the media.

Anna Eriksen Terzian showed how teenagers in France had worked with media and history to create their own presentation of what had happened during the French revolution. *Karin Stigbrand* described how the question of violence is discussed by the Swedish Council on Media Violence and gave some examples of teaching materials, texts and films, produced around this theme.

It was obvious during the plenary discussions that comparative research and evaluation can inspire and support the development of Media Education in each country. More contacts between researchers, teachers and professionals from Latin America, Africa, Asia, North America and Europe should be encouraged.

A first step is a coming UNESCO conference in Vienna 1999. The ambition is to invite researchers from different countries together with decision makers, representatives of governmental authorities in education and media professionals. Media Education must be an important subject for the first decade of the 21st century.

The São Paulo programme and about 150 conference papers (in Portuguese, Spanish and English) are available on a CD-ROM. Information about the congress and WCME is also available from:

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AWARD TO ASSOCIATION FOR MEDIA LITERACY, ONTARIO

At the 1998 International Congress on Communication and Education and the II World Meeting on Media Education in São Paulo, an international award was given to Ontario's Association for Media Literacy (AML), Canada, as the most important media education organisation.

AML was founded in 1978 by Barry Duncan, also its former president, as a grass roots organisation dedicated to promoting the teaching of school courses in media literacy. Current president is high school teacher Carolyn Wilson.

In 1986 AML members authored a 230 page document for the Ontario Teachers' Federation and the Ontario Ministry of Education, titled *Media Literacy Resource Guide*. This Guide has been a best-seller in media literacy circles ever since in both its English and French language versions. It has been translated into Japanese, Italian and Spanish. The Guide helped establish Ontario as the first jurisdiction in North America to make the study of the media a compulsory part of the high school English curriculum.

The recently revised *Ontario English Curriculum for Grades 1-8, Language* (1997) includes compulsory expectations in media literacy for elementary grades. AML executive members are part of the team now writing the curriculum documents for secondary school English expected to take effect in September, 1999.

E-mail address to AML: aml@interlog.com
Source: Press release by Chris M. Worsnop, AML

Adult Education – For Better Children's Television

JOSÉ LUIS OLIVARI REYES
Director, CENECA

Children's TV-habits, including cable TV, video games and non-coded television, have brought into the limelight a debate centring around the positive aspects of children's subjectivity and activity in the processing of video-technology. However, the rapid development of these technologies and society's growing dependency on consumption have generated new social gaps. An example is the flourishing of new children's cable-channels, which contributes to the increasing inequality in television. In Chile, as in many other countries, the best TV programmes are accessible only to children from the most favoured socio-economic groups; it is a fact that private schools and homes that support diversified entertainment not only affect the supply of programmes but also the demand. As for the programmes on non-coded television, they are becoming more homogeneous and less money will be spent on innovations in the future. Furthermore, there is a tendency to broadcast programmes from Japan and North America.

At the same time, TV channels are more and more inclined to try to attract younger children to adolescent programmes, thus increasing their audience. In this regard, there is still a lack of in-depth research focused on children's TV habits and perception of, for instance, musical clips (studied from the point of view of narrative methods in TV) and commercial spots.

A THREE-YEAR-OLD CHILD has already acquired considerable knowledge from watching TV, or as stated by Meyrowitz: "television accompanies children in their learning about the world long before they are able to walk the streets on their own". It is, therefore, necessary to expand our knowledge by studying children's conception of TV: their preferences and perceptions of its usefulness. In order to free ourselves from preconceived notions, it is essential that we become familiar with the special features of TV's emotive language. It is also increasingly important that we encourage children to discuss their feelings about TV in educational centres, day-care centres and schools.

IN CHILE, CENECA CONDUCTS investigations across a range of social groups. In order to promote better children's television, CENECA stresses the importance of fortifying training programmes for *adults* — training programmes that do not take a defensive attitude towards television. There is considerable room for development in this area, not only with regard to promoting critical and active reception on the part of parents, educators, administrators and professionals in the field, but also with regard to encouraging active production of TV programmes in nursery school, and primary and secondary school environments. Moreover, while promoting critical and active reception of TV programmes, it is important to bear in mind the impact of their content, the contexts and conditions of reception, the social and cultural environment, the lifestyles of the families, the children's psychosocial characteristics as well as the active part children play in the resignification of television and other alternatives available to them. Using television as an instrument for observation and research, CENECA has been studying initiatives aimed at collecting data that will help to make pedagogical interventions more adequate and better adapted to the educational reality.

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New Research Project on Media Literacy in Japan

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE for Educational Research of Japan (NIER), which is a government research organization under the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture, has currently launched a four-year research project (from fiscal year 1998 to 2001) under the theme of "Comprehensive Study of Media Literacy in the Lifelong Learning Society". Its aim is to identify policy strategies to promote media literacy for all people in Japan and to propose theory and practical programs to be implemented in schools, universities and non-formal education facilities (including adult education).

Thirty-eight Japanese researchers in and outside of our institute are participating in the project. They are divided into three teams, namely: 1) School education research team, 2) Non-formal education research team, 3) International comparative studies team.

I am in charge of the comparative studies team, and have just started to collect information and materials from previous research on media literacy world-wide. We are planning some positive studies in Japan and abroad, starting next year. Using this occasion, we hope to make contact and exchange information with specialists in media literacy all over the world.

Yukiko Sawano, Senior Researcher
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MEDIA EDUCATION RESEARCH SECTION OF IAMCR

The General Assembly and Scientific Conference of IAMCR (The International Association for Media and Communication Research) was held in Glasgow, Scotland, July, 26-30, 1998.

Joe Keval Kumar, INDIA, was appointed new president of the Media Education Research Section of IAMCR. Vice president is José Martínez-de-Toda, Italy.

Papers presented at the Media Education Research Section in Glasgow

Aparecida Baccega, Maria; School of Communication and Arts of the University of São Paulo, Brazil. *Communication & Education : From the Edited World to the Construction of the World.*

Bang, Jørgen & Fibiger, Bo; Department of Information and Media Science, Aarhus University, Denmark. *Codes and Modalities in Media Supported Learning.*

Bidone de Azevedo e Souza, Valdemarina; Pontificia Universidade Catolica de Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. *Internet and Interdisciplinarity : Possibilities of Interaction.*

Crespo, Donaciano Bartolome J.; University Complutense, Spain. *Progress in the Development of the Intelligence Through the Curricular Integration of the Press.*

Eduardo, Julio; Benavides Campos, Santaf de Bogot, Colombia. (Title and abstract not provided.)

Fedorov, Alexander V.; Taganrog State Pedagogical Institute, Russia. *The Training System of the Students of the Pedagogical Institutes and Universities for the Aestetic Education of the Pupils on the Basis of the Screen Arts/Cinema, TV, Video.*

Furtado Rahde, Maria Beatriz; Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil. *The Value of Comics as Media Communication and Pedagogical Reflection.*

Kumar, Keval J.; Resource Centre for Media Education & Research, India. (Title and abstract not provided.)

Lewis, Peter M.; Middlesex University, U.K. *U.K. : The Radio Research Project.*

Martinez-de-Toda, José; Roma, Italy. *The Six Dimensions of Media Education (Methodology of Evaluation).*

Odair Citelli, Adilson; School of Communication and Arts, São Paulo, Brazil. *Communication and School.*

Pande, Manisha; India. *Multimedia Intervention in Distance Education : A Role Analysis in the Indian Scenario.*

Sandoval, José Maximiliano Henriques & Mendes dos Santos, Reginaldo; Health Department, Universidade Estadual do Sudoeste da Bahia, Brazil. *The Health Communication in the Modern Time : The TV as an Educational Institution for the Health Care in the Families Living in the Urban-Periferic Communities.*

Sevillano García, María Luisa; Universidad Nacional de Educacion a Distancia, Madrid, Spain. *La Prensa Como Factor de Progreso Intelectual.*

Thottam, George; Iona College, NY, USA. *Media Education : The Missing Link of Communication Education in the United States.*

Tufte, Birgitte; Royal Danish School of Educational Studies, Denmark. *Girl's and Boy's Media Culture – Two Different Worlds?*

Tuominen, Sirkku; Department of Teacher Education, University of Tampere, Finland. *Making Media Visible in Finnish Schools.*

Paper presented at the NEQTAR Working Group (Network on Qualitative Audience Research) in Glasgow

Sjöberg, Ulrika; Media and Communication Studies, Lund University, Sweden. *Within the Home: Domestic Uses as Everyday Action.*

Voices with Volume

Children's Production of an Audio Cassette

SARAH McNEILL
UNLIMITED Productions

The research project *Children and Decision Making*, 1998, set up by Nigel Thomas and Claire O'Kane, International Centre for Childhood Studies, University of Wales Swansea, U.K., was a study of participation by children aged 8-12 in decisions when they are looked after by local authorities. The research, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, was done in 1996-97 in seven local authorities in Wales and the English borders. A survey of all 225 children looked after at the start of the research was followed by a detailed study of 47 children who were interviewed individually and in groups – their social workers, carers, and some parents were also interviewed.

A range of activities and materials were used to enable children to look at how decisions are taken in their lives and to evaluate the processes involved. The research showed the importance of everyday decisions in children's lives and in the formal meetings they might attend. It was also about what makes for effective communication between children and adults.

ONE OF THE ACTIONS arising from this research was the production of an audio-cassette by a group of the children involved who elected to participate in making recordings and who selected for themselves the name *Voices with Volume*. The tape is an unusual outcome for a university research project. The university was the venue in 1996 of an international conference on Children's Rights. Aspects of child-participation at that event included a focus on the UNICEF International Children's Day of Broadcasting with playback of recordings made with children. That year UNICEF had produced and distributed audio cassettes of children's voices (in three languages) to radio stations all around the world for broadcasting on the Day.

Claire O'Kane, who subsequently worked as senior researcher on the *Children and Decision Making* project, was one of the conference organisers, and she recognised the potential of making recordings with children as a powerful tool to communicate what they have to say. She also envisaged the tape production process as an important element in maximising the participatory experience for those children and young people involved in the Swansea project.

MAKING SOUND RECORDINGS using microphone and tape recorder is a simple and effective first step into the world of media and communications skills. Children find this an easy step to take. They enjoy learning to use the simple technology involved. It is fun. For the purpose of this project, children were able to meet in a small radio studio which enabled them to grasp how the recording techniques they were using could become part of the wider medium.

Before they reached the point of being ready to sit in front of a microphone and record their own work, the *Voices with Volume* group completed several preparatory stages. Claire O'Kane organised workshops to involve them all in making decisions about the material they would record. As mentioned, 47 children and young people had been interviewed in the original body of research about their involvement in decisions that affected their lives. This material was confidential and often of a sensitive nature. Care had to be taken to respect the identities of those who took part. Transcriptions were made of these interviews and individual names protected.

When the possibility of making sound recordings was raised with the interviewees, each person had the option to take part. In the end, ten children self-selected to be part of the recording group. At the ensuing workshop sessions, it was this group of ten who read through pages of transcript material, selected excerpts, decided who would read which items and helped sort the quotes under a series of section headings for an audio-cassette.

Part of the workshop time was given over to learning about using a microphone, speaking clearly for the recording session and other aspects of studio work, such as the need for a quiet acoustic background! Another part of the workshop was assigned to playing games, all of them participatory strategies deployed by Claire O'Kane to maximise the group's motivation, mutual trust and co-operation.

THE RESULTS OF THEIR EFFORTS, now available on the *Voices with Volume* cassette,[1] offer an insight into the lives of children who live away from home. The sequence of young voices tell how children see their situation and to what extent they feel they have enough say in decisions that concern them. It is very clear from these recordings that children are more capable of talking about their views and their feelings than they are ever given credit for and that they want to have a say in decisions about their lives. Some children are totally excluded from such decisions. It is clear that they want to be listened to, that they want to be supported in having a say in decisions, that they want to find out what is going on and to have time to think about things that are going to affect them. Their top priority is not (as most adults might assume) simply to get what they want.

The *Voices with Volume* cassette presents about twenty minutes of material on each side. Titles of the sections on Side A are: How Adults Listen; Our Experiences; How to

Have a Say; How Much Notice; and Why We Want to Have a Say. On Side B the section headings are: Views About Social Services; Views on Review Meetings; Advice for Everyone; Our Ideal Social Worker; and Final Words.

THE PROJECT IS AN EXCITING STEP into the media world for this group of children. It is also an innovative application of media process to action and maximise the communication of an important piece of research. The sound of this mix of voices impacts on first hearing the tape in a way the printed word representing what they have to say, can never equate.

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Note

1. The cassette is available from The International Centre for Childhood Studies, University of Wales Swansea, Singleton Park, GB - Swansea SA2 8PP, Wales, UNITED KINGDOM, Tel/Fax: +44 1792 295 767, E-mail: n.thomas@swan.ac.uk. Price £8.00.

NOW IT IS OUR TURN TO SPEAK!

During Autumn 1998, children and young people from Latin America, Canada and the U.S. have taken part in an International Forum on Communication for and with Children. The theme of this video and storyboard contest, entitled *Now it is our turn to speak*, is inspired by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that "The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice".

The forum is organised by the Iberoamericana University, Mexico, and UNICEF, along with other organisations focused on children's rights. The winning video and storyboard, judged for use of technology and aesthetic quality in praising human values, were honoured with the Onix Award during an event in November and will be broadcast on the International Children's Day of Broadcasting in December, 1998.

For information, please contact:
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TO TELL A STORY...

UNICEF is involved in a new joint project with TFO-TVOntario, *The Rights of the Child* described through the personal stories of children. Filmed on location the stories present a portrait of the problems children face today. The 13 episodes, each 26 minutes, are available in English, French, Spanish, and international versions.

For more information:
André L. Champange, TFO-TVOntario
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E-mail: andre_champagne@tvo.org

Cartoons for Children's Rights

A JOINT VENTURE of UNICEF and the international animation community has resulted in a unique cartoon campaign with the aim of spreading the message of Children's Rights throughout the world.

Cartoons for Children's Rights consist of 100 thirty-second animation shorts produced by more than 80 companies, representing at least 25 countries around the world.

"An alliance with the animation industry uses not only the power of animation, but also the influence of the broadcast media to increase awareness about children's rights", UNICEF says.

The participating studios choose one or several rights from the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and work out the script in consultation with UNICEF. The two-fold aim of the spots is to educate adults about crucial child rights issues and to engage and entertain children as well as adults. The studios donate staff and services for the production of the spots, which are non-verbal or have voice-over narration. To enable participation of artists from countries with limited financial means, 20 production stipends are provided by the Cartoon Network.

UNICEF INVITES BROADCASTERS around the world to use their influence to make the Convention on the Rights of the Child *the first truly universal law of humankind* by airing the spots over the next two years. All 100-spots are free of charge and broadcasters are asked to pay only the minimal cost of the tape. The first group of spots is now available from UNICEF.

The hopes are that the *Cartoons for Children's Rights* campaign will expand the success of the sixth International Children's Day of Broadcasting, in December 1998, and make children's rights an important issue in television and radio broadcasting.

To order the spots, please contact:
Bill Hetzer, Division of Communication, UNICEF
3 United Nations Plaza, US - New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel: +1 212 326 7290, Fax: +1 212 326 7731
E-mail: whetzer@unicef.org

International Children's Day of Broadcasting

Sunday, December 13, 1998

The International Children's Day of Broadcasting, celebrated on the second Sunday every December, is a day when broadcasters around the world *Tune in to Kids*. This year the Day is celebrated for the sixth time, and every year, thousands of broadcasters in more than a hundred countries take part. The Day is a joint initiative of UNICEF and the International Council of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

For more information, please contact: AnneMarie Kane, UNICEF, Division of Communication, 3 United Nations Plaza, US - New York, NY 10017, USA, Tel: +1 212 326 7288 Fax: +1 212 326 7731, E-mail: akane@unicef.org, Web site: http://www.unicef.org/icdb

Australian and New Zealand Teachers of Media International Conference "Media '99. Where R We @??"

Auckland, New Zealand, January 14-17, 1999

This conference, which is organised by the National Association of Media Educators (N.A.M.E.), New Zealand , promises inspiring and challenging perspectives on media teaching, research and theory. The objective is to examine where we are in media education, as the millenium nears, as well as to look forward to the prospect of transformation and change.

The keynote speakers will cover topics as: youth television, youth audiences, the changing way audiences and texts relate, censorship, popular culture and the implications of new technologies.

For information, please contact: Anne Winnall, President of N.A.M.E and Conference Convener, Tel: +64 9 535 2620 (ext 811), Fax: +64 9 535 2621, E-mail: wl@macleans.ak.planet.co.nz

Responding to Child Maltreatment

San Diego, California, USA, January 25-29, 1999

This is the annual conference of the Center for Child Protection. The International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) is one of the collaborating organisations.

As part of the International Track provided by ISPCAN, a session on **Violence in the Media: International Perspectives** will be held on Wednesday 27th. The session will be led by Professor Kevin Browne, University of Birmingham, England.

For more information, please contact: Kimberly Svevo, Executive Director, ISPCAN, 200 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 500, US - Chicago, IL 60601, USA, Tel: +1 312 578 1401, Fax: +1 312 578 1405, E-mail: kimsispcan@aol.com

University of Manchester International Broadcasting Symposium "Is regulation still an option?"

Manchester, United Kingdom, March 24-25, 1999

Call for Papers

Media professionals, academics and students of media are invited to submit papers on the theme for consideration by the Symposium Committee. Poster sessions will also be available. Format: Abstract max. 150 words, final paper max. 3,000 words. Deadlines: Abstract, January 1, 1999; Papers, February 1, 1999.

For more information, please contact: Dr. Sue Ralph, Director, School of Education, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, GB - Manchester M13 9PL, UNITED KINGDOM, Tel/Fax: +44 161 275 3398, E-mail:ralph@fs1.ed.man.ac.uk

First International Conference for Journalists Who Write about Children's and Women's Issues

Skopje, Macedonia, May 20-23, 1999

The aim of the conference is to establish collaboration among journalists in the world working with children's and women's issues.

Arranging the conference is "Journalists on Children's and Women's Rights and Environment in Macedonia", an organisation (NGO) involved in projects related to: street children, domestic violence, crisis centers for women, women's and girls' health and education, rural women, trafficking children and women, and eco-tourism.

For information, please contact: Natasha Dokovska, Journalist, Jane Sandanski 86-2/15, MK - 91000 Skopje, MACEDONIA, Tel/Fax. +389 91 446 135, E-mail: dokovska@yahoo.com

AGORA '99

Cyprus, June 25-29, 1999

The annual childrens' media event AGORA, arranged by E.C.T.C. (European Children's Television Centre) attracts heads of children's television departments from more than 40 countries, as well as producers, distributors, researchers, academics and new media professionals. AGORA 1999 and 2000 will also work as preparatory stations for the Third World Summit on Media for Children, Greece, 2001.

See page 14 for more information on AGORA. Also note the "Kids for Kids Video Festival" for children's own productions.

Contact Address: E.C.T.C., 20, Analipseo Str., Vrilissia, GR – 152 35 Athens, GREECE, Tel: +301 68 51 258, Fax: +301 68 17 987, E-mail: ectc1@beryl.kapatel.gr

Media Education Research Section of IAMCR

Leipzig, Germany, end of July, 1999 and Singapore, July 15-20, 2000

The Media Education Research Section of IAMCR has promoted research in the subject for more than a decade, and is planning to bring out an edited publication of some of the papers presented at earlier conferences.

For papers presented at the Media Education Research Section in Glasgow 1998, see page 26.

For more information, please contact: Dr. Keval J. Kumar, President, Media Education Research Section of IAMCR, Resource Centre for Media Education & Research, 4 Chintamani Apts, Kale Path, Bhandarkar Rd., IN - Pune 411004, INDIA, Tel/Fax: +91 21 235 1018, E-mail: kevalkumar@hotmail.com

National Children's Film Festival

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, October 8-10, 1999

The National Children's Film Festival (NCFF) in partnership with The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, is the first international festival dedicated to young people creating their own films and videos, expressing what is of interest and significance to them.

The NCFF was founded to empower children and adolescents with their own voice and vision, reaching out to youth of all races, religions, cultures, and those who are economically, physically, and mentally challenged.

In the NCFF's second year 1998, there were 225 entries representing approximately 2,000 young people from across the United States and Canada. The NCFF's goal for the 1999 program is to involve many thousands of young people.

Deadline for all materials: April 15, 1999.

For information, please contact: National Children's Film Festival, P.O. Box 88500, US - Indianapolis, Indiana 46208-0500, USA, Tel: +1 317 464 1360, Fax: +1 317 464 1450, Web site: http://www.childrensfilmfest.org/

Summit 2000: Children, Youth & the Media – Beyond the Millennium

Toronto, Canada, May 13-17, 2000

This international Summit will draw some 1,500 delegates from around the world. Delegates will be people involved in the production and distribution of screen based media – television, film, computer – for children and youth; as well as anyone involved in media education – such as teachers, researchers, educators, community and religious groups.

The Summit is being coordinated by the Alliance for Children and Television, the American Center for Children's Television, the Jesuit Communication Project, and the Ontario Association for Media Literacy.

Call for Conference Workshops

Proposals for media education workshops are invited for Summit 2000. Such workshops should be inter-active, use audio-visual materials, and have classroom applications. Presentations will be in English.

Workshop proposals of around 700 words, should be submitted by 1 March, 1999, and sent to: John J. Pungente, SJ, Jesuit Communication Project, 60 St. Clair Avenue East - Suite 1002, CA-Toronto, Ontario M4T 1N5, CANADA, Tel: +1 416 515 0466, Fax: +1 416 515 0467, E-mail: pungente@chass.utoronto.ca

Call for Papers

The three content pillars of the conference will be: production and financing; distribution and access; and media education. Papers are invited in all three pillars from academics, researchers, consultants and educators. Abstracts and papers may be submitted in English, French and Spanish, and they will be refereed by an international panel of academics.
Abstracts of around 700 words should be submitted by 1 March 1999, and sent to: Robyn Quin, Associate Professor, Head - School of Communications and Multimedia, Edith Cowan University, Bradford St., AU - Mt. Lawley, WESTERN AUSTRALIA 6050, Tel: +61 8 9 370 6221, Fax: +61 8 9 370 6668, E-mail: r.quin@cowan.edu.au

Web site of the Summit 2000: http://www.summit2000.net

27th IBBY World Congress "The New World for a New World – Children's Books for the New Millenium"

Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, September 18-22, 2000

IBBY's (the International Board on Books for Young People) biennial congresses are the most important meeting points for IBBY members and other people involved in children's books and reading development. Several hundred people from all over the world attend the professional programme, which includes lectures, panel discussions, seminar sessions and workshops on the current congress theme.

"Peace through Children's Books" was the theme of the 26th IBBY Congress 1998 in New Delhi, India.

On the 27th IBBY World Congress eight master conferences will address the following subjects: Autonomies, integration and multi-cultural aspects; utopia and literature for children; literature – social function, democratization and access; image and culture; ethics and literature for children; the reader of the 21st century; book dialectic – new technologies; and the meeting of the New and the Old World.

For information, please contact: Silvia Castrillón, Fundalectura, Colombian Section of IBBY, Apartado 048902, Av. (Calle) 40, No 16-46, CO - Bogotá D.C., COLOMBIA, Tel. +57 1 320 15 11, Fax +57 1 287 70 71, E-mail: fundalec@impsat.net.co Web site: http://www.ibby.org

Second International Forum of Researchers "Young People and the Media"

Sydney, Australia, November 27-December 1, 2000

The Second International Forum of Children and Media Researchers will focus on all areas of the media – television, print, radio, the Internet and multimedia.

The newsletter of IRFCAM (International Research Forum on Children and Media), is the main vehicle for communication about the Sydney Forum.

For further information, please contact: Research Section, Australian Broadcasting Authority, P.O. Box Q500, Queen Victoria Building, AU - Sydney, NSW 1230, AUSTRALIA, Tel: +61 2 9334 7700, Fax +61 2 9334 7799, E-mail: research@aba.gov.au Web site: http://www.aba.gov.au

Third World Summit on Media for Children

Athens, Greece, in March, 2001

The Third World Summit, organised by the European Children's Television Centre (E.C.T.C.), aims at bringing out the differences in language, colour, national and cultural identities, and at working for the creation of a common audiovisual language that supports the rights of children.

An on-line service, "Media Talks on Children", for information, discussion and exchange of views and development of co-operations in preparation of the Summit will be launched on January 1, 1999.

If you wish to present ideas, events, projects or simply want to participate, contact: E.C.T.C., 20, Analipseos Str., Vrilissia, GR - 152 35 Athens, GREECE, Tel: +301 68 51 258, Fax: +301 68 17 987, E-mail: ectc1@beryl.kapatel.gr

THANK YOU FOR SENDING PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION

Listed below is a selection of materials which have been sent to the Clearinghouse. In coming issues of the newsletter we will continue to publish references to recent books, articles, reports and other materials, including those sent to the Clearinghouse.

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Deadline for contributions
to the next issue of the newsletter is
February 15, 1999

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THE CLEARINGHOUSE

We welcome researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organisations and interested individuals to the Clearinghouse information network. As a participant you will receive our publications (in English) with the contributions of other network participants from all parts of the globe. (Participation is free of charge.)

The value of the Clearinghouse as a forum rests in the breadth of its coverage and the commitment of its participants. In short: the more relevant information we gather, and the more who contribute from all continents, the better our services.

We are interested in research related to children, young people and media violence, and in documentation of measures, activities and alternatives of relevance to this field.

News briefs and short articles to our newsletter, *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, will be greatly valued, as will notices of coming and recent conferences, seminars and other events; of new publications; and of active associations and organisations with children and media in view.

We are also grateful for receiving relevant publications and materials — if possible, two copies of each, please! They will successively be informed of in the newsletters, and be documented at the Clearinghouse into a growing knowledge base for overviews, compilations and bibliographies of interest to various groups of users.

As for publications and materials in other languages than English, French, German and Spanish, we kindly ask you for complementary translations of the *titles*.

We look forward to hearing from you, not least regarding any requests or suggestions you may have concerning Clearinghouse services. And we hope that you will come to appreciate our efforts — as a means of making your own work known in wider circles, and as a way to keep abreast of others' work.

VISIT THE CLEARINGHOUSE ON THE WEB

You can find Clearinghouse information and all issues of our newsletter on Nordicom's web site at:
http://www.nordicom.gu.se

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THE CLEARINGHOUSE IS TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND EFFECTIVIZE KNOWLEDGE ON CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND MEDIA VIOLENCE, SEEN IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD.

Göteborg University

Nordic Council of Ministers

NORDICOM
Nordic Information Center for Media and Communication Research

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News on Children and Violence on the Screen

Vol 3, No 1 1999

SPECIAL ISSUE

The Role of Media Research –
Report from the Expert Meeting at UNESCO on Sexual Abuse of Children, Child Pornography and Paedophilia on the Internet, January 18-19, 1999

THE UNESCO EXPERT MEETING

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A newsletter from

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

at Nordicom
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Sweden

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THE CLEARINGHOUSE IS LOCATED AT NORDICOM

NORDICOM is an organ of co-operation between the Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The overriding goal and purpose is to make the media and communication efforts undertaken in the Nordic countries known, both throughout and far beyond our part of the world.

NORDICOM uses a variety of channels – newsletters, journals, books, databases – to reach researchers, students, decision-makers, media practitioners, journalists, teachers and interested members of the general public.

NORDICOM works to establish and strengthen links between the Nordic research community and colleagues in all parts of the world, both by means of unilateral flows and by linking individual researchers, research groups and institutions.

NORDICOM also documents media trends in the Nordic countries. The joint Nordic information addresses users in Europe and further afield. The production of comparative media statistics forms the core of this service.

NORDICOM is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

The Nordic Information Center for Media and Communication Research (Nordicom) has set up an international clearinghouse on children and violence on the screen. The Clearinghouse receives financial support from the Government of Sweden and UNESCO.

The Clearinghouse is to contribute to and effectivize knowledge on children, young people and media violence, seen in the perspective of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The prime task is to make new knowledge and data known to prospective users all over the world.

The International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen informs various groups of users – about

- research findings concerning children, young people and media violence,
- ongoing research on children and media violence,
- children's access to mass media and their media use,
- training and courses of study on children and the media,
- positive alternatives to media violence, and
- measures and activities which aim to limit gratuitous violence on television, in films, and in interactive media.

The object of the Clearinghouse is three-fold: to attract attention to the question of violence on the screen and its role in the lives of children and young people, to stimulate initiatives and activities to combat gratuitous violence, and to help provide a better basis for policy in the field.

The Clearinghouse is user-oriented, which means that our services are offered in response to demand and are adapted to the needs of our clients.

The Clearinghouse publishes a newsletter and a yearbook.

We welcome researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organisations and interested individuals to the Clearinghouse information network. As a participant you will receive our publications (in English) with the contributions of other network participants from all parts of the globe. (Participation is free of charge.)

The value of the Clearinghouse as a forum rests in the breadth of its coverage and the commitment of its participants. In short: the more relevant information we gather, and the more who contribute from all continents, the better our services.

We are interested in research related to children, young people and media violence, and in documentation of measures, activities and alternatives of relevance to this field (see the six points above).

News briefs and short articles to our newsletter, *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, will be greatly valued, as will notices of coming and recent conferences, seminars and other events; of new publications; and of active associations and organisations with children and media in view.

We are also grateful for receiving relevant publications and materials — if possible, two copies of each, please! They will successively be informed of in the newsletters, and be documented at the Clearinghouse into a growing knowledge base for overviews, compilations and bibliographies of interest to various groups of users.

As for publications and materials in other languages than English, French, German and Spanish, we kindly ask you for complementary translations of the *titles*.

We look forward to hearing from you, not least regarding any requests or suggestions you may have concerning Clearinghouse services. And we hope that you will come to appreciate our efforts — as a means of making your own work known in wider circles, and as a way to keep abreast of others' work.

Introduction

CECILIA VON FEILITZEN
Scientific Co-ordinator, The Clearinghouse

It is estimated that less than 5 per cent of the world's population accesses the Internet, a figure that is expected to increase rapidly. Although quite promising as a medium for information, education, culture, entertainment and participation, the Internet is also used for dissemination of harmful and illegal contents.

'Operation Cathedral' – an international police collaboration assisted by Interpol, on-going since 1996 – resulted, for example, in the arrest of 96 people in twelve countries on September 2, 1998. This case demonstrated how widely spread the paedophile Internet networks are and gave an approximation of their traffic in illegal images. The largest equipment seizure involved a person with 48 gigabytes of child pornography files at home; in another country total seizures amounted to 500,000 images and more than 120 videos of child pornography.[1]

In a press release the next day, UNESCO Director-General Frederico Mayor declared the need for urgent action against the sexual and commercial exploitation of children. Bearing in mind the demands from almost every quarter of the globe for action against violence and perversity committed upon children, he proposed to convene a meeting of agencies and specialists involved in the fight against paedophilia, child pornography and child prostitution on the Internet. "UNESCO works to uphold the free flow of ideas by word and image, and always defends freedom of expression", he said. "But we must not tolerate that paedophilia, child pornography and child prostitution pervert these roads of freedom."

Sexual Abuse of Children, Child Pornography and Paedophilia on the Internet – An international challenge was the title of this Expert Meeting at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, January 18-19, 1999. There were more than 400 participants. The first session of the meeting dealt with the real world – *sexual abuse of children and paedophilia* – broken down into three main themes: 1) the family social and economic context, 2) how to combat sexual abuse of children, and 3) legal and judicial aspects. The second session treated the virtual world – *child pornography and paedophilia on the Internet* – also under three themes: 1) promoting the free flow of information in the face of world-wide concern about the sexual abuse of children, child pornography and paedophilia on the Internet, 2) how to make the Net safe for children – by means of content providers, filters, search engines, self-rating of web sites, networking, etc., and 3) research, information, monitoring, and sensitisation of the public.

THE FINAL REPORT of the meeting says, that UNESCO sought to provide the venue for an overall assessment of what has been achieved by UN specialised agencies, governmental and non-governmental organisations, foundations, police and judiciary forces, psychologists and the media. Participants sought to enlist the resources that could be counted on and to describe the work that still needed expertise and financing. Stock was taken of information provided in existing reports already made by NGOs since the 1996 Stockholm World Conference on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and the 1997 expert meeting on Child Pornography on the Internet in Lyons.

The Final Report, which summarises the speeches, further underlines that it was gratifying to note how the International Labour Organization and the World Tourism Organization, The European Commission and the Council of Europe in co-operation with several NGOs had all been struggling to protect children from sex-trafficking and sale, from prostitution and sex tourism, and from the production of pornographic material; several have also been working towards strengthening existing international instruments in this domain. But it was clearly confirmed that making the Internet safe for children was not a question of censorship.

The overall achievement was **a Declaration and an Action Plan** put forth by the participants. While many of the actions are addressed to UNESCO, the Action Plan proposes that all actors must take these vital steps together.

IN THIS SPECIAL ISSUE of the Clearinghouse newsletter, we have reproduced the Declaration and the Action Plan. As an information centre focusing on children and media violence, we have also given special attention to those speeches and papers at the meeting that dealt with **the role of media research** in the context of child pornography and paedophilia on the Internet. As Dr. Ulla Carlsson, Director of Nordicom and participant in the meeting, emphasises, little research has treated the accessibility of pornography, violent pornography and child pornography; how many and which people produce and consume it; the influences it may have on adults and children; and how to come to terms with this new media landscape. Casting light on these questions is an important task for media scholars – but combating the possible deeper consequences, such as increased sexual abuse of children, requires multinational and multidisciplinary collaboration.

Note

1. Agnès Fournier de Saint Maur (1999) Sexual Abuse of Children on the Internet: A New Challenge for INTERPOL. Paper to the Expert Meeting at UNESCO on 18-19 January 1999. Specialized Crime Unit, Interpol General Secretariat.

For further information about the meeting, see UNESCO's web site: http://www.unesco.org/webworld/index.html

Child Pornography on the Internet

Research and Information

ULLA CARLSSON
Director of Nordicom

The following is an excerpt from Ulla Carlsson's speech:

Our cultures are currently experiencing a new phase of the digitisation process. Technology is changing the options available to media audiences, and we are expected to choose what we consume to a far greater extent. Consider, for example, that only twenty years ago viewers in Sweden had access to only two national television channels. One consequence of this proliferation of channels and sources of information and culture is a fragmentisation and individualisation of the audience – our shared experience of mass media is shrinking, which means that our common frame of reference concerning society around us is weakened.

Internet is generally singled out as the most striking illustration of the 'digital revolution'. Internet is now making the transition into a new phase – from being considered a technology to representing a medium of information and communication. More and more, Internet seems to be a medium that is accessible to many, a medium that is not schedule-bound, but which consists of a continuous flow. In many respects, Internet is a medium for the young.

It is clear to us at the Clearinghouse that violent content has found its way to 'the net', and it is relatively easy to gain access to such material. The violence is both fictional and documentary. Thus, Internet is yet another channel of communication through which we are exposed to gratuitous violence; clearly, the violent content available there must be studied on a par with other media's output. This is a new task for media scholars.

WE ALSO NOTE the increasing presence of violence of another kind on satellite television channels and on Internet. I am referring to the violence in pornographic films and images. Professor Jo Groebel has shown how easy it is to access sadistic pornography on the Internet – particularly via 'news groups'.[1] The kinds of violence perpetrated against women in this content represent an important component in the social structures which would keep women inferior to men. These kinds of violence require somewhat different approaches and methods of analysis than have generally been applied in traditional studies of media violence. Media researchers have not focused on such content and the issues it raises to any appreciable extent.

THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Article 34

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

(a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;

(b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practises;

(c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

We have seen remarkably few studies of the effects of pornography on those who view it, and we know even less about the effects on young and very young viewers. Studies of sadistic pornography are even rarer. But the possibility that violent pornography may lead some men to commit rape is rather widely debated in many societies today.

In this connection it is also important to point out that we hardly know anything about how media depictions of sex influence children. Content analyses tell us, however, that sex scenes are much more common on television today than they were only a decade or so ago. How might this influence young viewers' attitudes, values and behaviour? We should have the benefit of answers to that question when we set about studying the effects of viewing pornography.

THE ISSUE OF PORNOGRAPHY on Internet automatically leads us to the issue of child pornography on the net. Both the distribution and possession of child pornography are criminal offences in most countries today. The problem has aroused considerable attention in recent years, both in media coverage and among law enforcement authorities. Effective co-operation between national police forces aims to track down and arrest offenders, but also to monitor media content. In addition, some major organisations – regional bodies such as the European Union and interest organizations like ECPAT (see page 8) – have also taken initiatives. Finally, a mass movement is mobilising on different levels in the world community to combat sexual exploitation of minors, child pornography and paedophilia on Internet.

That Internet is used to distribute child pornography is indisputable. The net is used to reproduce and disseminate child pornography, but also as a vehicle for soliciting and procuring. The rapidity, economy and simplicity of the medium has effectivised the distribution of child pornography immensely. The net's global reach implies unprecedented conditions for effectively spreading illegal images. At the same time, we should bear in mind that "Internet" is comprised of several different fora – World Wide Web, Usenet and IRC (Internet Relay Chatrooms) among them. Arrests and confiscations have been made, mainly in 'news groups' on Usenet. Self-regulation seems to be more effective among the websites.

Child pornography via Internet has proven much more elusive than other pornographic material; this is due to the fact that child pornography is socially unacceptable and illegal. Preserving one's anonymity seems to be a prime interest among those who exchange illegal matter via the net. Nonetheless, as Professor Groebel's study confirms, any reasonably skilled Internet user can find child pornographic content.

It is in cases where Internet serves as a medium of mass communication that mass communication researchers have important tasks. They can analyze the content and determine its effects on users – adults and children alike. But they should also explore the possibilities for the information society to, via self-regulation, come to terms with a new media landscape. Conceivably, unless dealt with effectively, the presence of child pornography on the net may call the legitimacy of free, uncontrolled flows of information – the raison d'être of Internet itself – into question.

BUT THE PROBLEM which UNESCO and this conference address is considerably broader than that. It might be formulated thus: What role does the presence and accessibility of child pornography on Internet play with respect to the problem of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children in the world today. The problem is much broader, deeper – and much more serious: the possibility that child pornography on Internet may lead to more widespread sexual exploitation of minors. Addressing this problem will require the commitment and collaboration of many different disciplines and professions: psychology, sociology, criminology, law, political science, religion, philosophy, etc. Media researchers are but one – in this context perhaps even peripheral – discipline among many that can contribute to casting light on and combating such a complex problem as the sexual abuse of children.

Something discussed on the periphery of public debate is the possibility of adverse effects on young Internet users who come in contact with the illegal material and, secondly, the question of effects on adults. It is in relation to questions like these that mass communication researchers can, together with psychologists and criminologists, provide new insights. A number of aspects must be taken into account – cognitive, emotional, attitudinal, behavioural, etc. Systematic studies that apply a battery of methods are called for: laboratory experiments, observations, surveys, followed by more comprehensive longitudinal studies. A first, decisive question is how this kind of research can best be facilitated. So far, conditions have not been the best. UNESCO, with its wealth of experience in scientific research, would seem well equipped to initiate highly relevant multinational and multidisciplinary research projects.

But before we can study the effects of pornography, sadistic pornography and child pornography, we need to know more about what is available – its accessibility, the content – and how many and which people consume it, as well as the circumstances under which they do so. Studies of these kinds have been few and far between to date.

We at the International Clearinghouse will naturally do everything we can to stimulate such research and to make research findings known so as to increase our collective and cumulative knowledge of how children and young people use and are affected by viewing sadistic pornography and child pornography. Ultimately, it is a question of safeguarding children's rights, and in this work we are guided by Article 17 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which enjoins us to ensure children's access to information and material of social and cultural benefit to them, whilst protecting them from material that is injurious to their well-being.

Note

1. Prof. Dr. Jo Groebel & Drs. Lucia Smit (1997) *Gewalt im Internet. Report für die Enquete-Kommission 'Zukunft der Medien' des Deutschen Bundestages.* Departement Media Psychology, Universität Utrecht, Netherlands.

See also a summary of the report in *News on Children and Violence on the Screen*, No. 2-3 1998. Newsletter from The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen, Nordicom, Göteborg University, Sweden.

THE WORLD CONGRESS AGAINST COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN IN 1996

This World Congress which took place in Stockholm, Sweden, August 27–31, 1996, was the culmination of a process of global mobilization against the commercial sexual exploitation of children which began in 1994 when the ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography, and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes) Campaign proposed the World Congress. The Government of Sweden hosted the Congress in co-operation with ECPAT, UNICEF and the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Three elements of the commercial sexual exploitation of children was brought into focus: child prostitution, the trafficking and sale of children for sexual purposes, and child pornography, including on the Internet.

The primary purpose of the Congress was to draw international attention to the problems of commercial sexual exploitation of children and to promote the development of national policies and programmes to combat all forms of such exploitation in the specific contexts in which they occur. To this end, the Congress considered and adopted a Declaration and an Agenda for Action. These and other information are available on the web site: http://www.childhub.ch

Paedophile Networking and the Internet

Newsgroups

RACHEL O'CONNELL
Research Co-ordinator
University College, Cork, Ireland

This is a brief summary of Rachel O'Connell's paper:

The paper presents two case studies within the COPINE research project. The studies are concerned with how individuals dedicated to child sex organise themselves on the Internet, and to the content of the pictures posted. The focus is Usenet newsgroups. Newsgroups – a very public form of virtual communication – are only one outlet for the expression of adult sexual interest in children on the Internet. It is likely that private e-mail, mailing lists, ICQ (I Seek You) and IRC (Internet Relay Chatrooms) have a greater role than newsgroups in the dissemination of more direct sensitive information, 'private' photographs, contacts, etc. These kinds of protocols also afford users the opportunity to communicate in 'real time'. Furthermore, IRC affords the option to open a Direct Channel of Communication (DCC) between two users, which bypasses the need for a server and thereby raises the level of security.

The method used in the case studies involved subscribing to a newsreader that provided access to all newsgroups in which pictures were posted. The newsgroups that might be concerned with adult sexual interest in children were noted and accessed. References in these made to other similar newsgroups were also noted. Of the 40,000 Usenet newsgroups identified, 0.07 per cent contained child erotica (children in stages of undress, but not sexually explicit) or pornography. From an organisational perspective, restricting their activities to a limited number of newsgroups has obvious advantages for paedophiles. And few newsgroups do not restrict the large amount of picture trading that takes place in the groups.

Some preliminary results from the analysis of the pictures posted during one week in January and one week in April 1998 are the following:

Newsgroups that contained pictures of male and female children together were few. In total fifteen newsgroups were identified that contained female child erotica and pornographic pictures. The largest amount of picture posting took place in newsgroups with the words 'pre-teen' and 'children' in the title. The overall number of female child pictures during the first week amounted to 3,487, posted by 193 users. The number of pictures during the second week, when two of the newsgroups were no longer in existence but another group had become more active, amounted to 5,233, posted by 313 users. (However, posters may use more than one pseudonym when posting to different newsgroups).

In January, nine newsgroups were found where pictures of boys were posted. In general these newsgroups contained the world 'boy' in the title. The overall number of male pictures during the first week amounted to 2,546, posted by 126 posters. In April the number of pictures was 2,070 and the number of posters 100.

Two thirds of all pictures posted could be described as erotic in nature and many of these appeared to be relatively recent, featuring children of Asian extraction or including text indicating Japanese origins. Pornographic photographs (as distinct from erotic) were largely either old European photographs, or more recent ones featuring Asian children. It seems likely that most of the pictures have their origins either in scanned magazine photographs, or in video captures. New erotic (as opposed to pornographic) photographs were mainly scanned from Japanese magazines. There were also growing numbers of digitised video clips, derived from videotape originals.

However, the vast majority of photographs found in newsgroups are greater than 15-20 years old. The identification of new from old is therefore an important issue that may have a direct child protection value, and an evidential value for crime scene analysis.

The content analyses, as well as an analysis of paedophile fantasies discussed in IRC chatrooms, further suggest that there are clear indications of individuals' sexual preferences – an individual user's postings are

PAEDOPHILIA: THE WORK OF ASSOCIATIONS, THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA AND RESEARCH

Elisabeth Auclaire, Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of the Child of the League for Human Rights, France, underlined in her speech and paper that research in this field is a must. Care must be taken not to make accusations without proof. It is important to analyze information content and modes of transmission, to set up preventive education programmes and to encourage countries that have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to make the necessary adjustments to bring their internal legislation into compliance. However, the new technologies should not be used as a scapegoat for our own shortcomings. By concentrating on the growth of paedophile networks on the Internet, we run the risk of relegating to a secondary position the most hidden, and by far most frequent, form of sexual abuse of children, namely, acts perpetrated within the family circle, by parents, grandparents, relatives, friends and acquaintances. We therefore must learn how to listen and be responsive to children. Children must be taught 'their rights' and to say 'no' to adults who do not respect them. There is a need for receptive places, where confidentiality is guaranteed, to which children can go without fear, sure of finding an attentive ear and effective assistance. And there is a need for a public health policy that takes account of the causes of child abuse.

specific and selective, defined in terms of factors including: sex of the child; stage of development of the child; ethnic origin of child; sexual interaction; use of force; adult involvement; sex of adult; number of adults; ethnic origin of adults; and sexual behaviour.

The pseudonyms of posters to one group who used the same pseudonym in January and April were noted. These pseudonyms represent some of the core set of posters to the group, which suggests that the individuals behind these pseudonyms are aware of each other, that there may be private communication between them, and that they gain recognition as the 'gurus' who seem to have access to large numbers of pictures and post regularly.

THE STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION of paedophile newsgroup activity are distinct. But the activity does not appear to operate in a strictly hierarchical fashion. Instead posters adopt a co-operative approach; the images are posted in a sympathetic environment that is supportive of the posters' rationalisations for child sex encounters.

Posters can be identified as having a variety of roles. The main 'promoting' roles are as follows:

Infrastructure advice/co-ordinators act as a protective buffer zone orchestrating paedophile Usenet newsgroup activity and giving advice (e.g., about the group, how to download and decode articles and pictures, how to post anonymously and prevent discovery, suitable e-mail addresses and other newsgroups, how to respond to 'Flames', i.e., anti-paedophile reactionaries).

Literature reviewers give detailed information regarding paedophile related publications, how to become a member of paedophile organisations, etc.

Story/fantasy generators directly engage in the production and posting of stories.

Support people contribute to a supportive context in which sexual interest in children can develop. They detail positive aspects of adult-child sexual interaction, claim to disagree with coerced sex between adult and child and fully support consensual sex between adult and child.

Posters and traders of child erotic and child pornographic pictures fall mainly into the following categories: child erotica only; child pornography only; hard core child pornography only; mixed child erotica and child pornography; multi-sex deviants. A large amount of the activity consists of swapping pictures. Posts may ask for a certain picture to complete a particular series; there are posts containing 'prize pictures', recent pictures, offers of free CDs of series of photos, etc.

There are also 'detractors' posting material to the paedophile newsgroups, i.e., the *reactionaries* who aggressively react against the content of the newsgroup postings, and *paedophile register propagators* who post identification details of paedophiles.

Thus, the Internet provides a uniquely safe, easily accessible, and supportive context for posting, trading and collecting child pornography. This illegal material drives a market that is distinctive in that it typically, in the newsgroups, does *not* involve the exchange of money.

RESEARCH AND CO-OPERATION

Professor Dr. Jo Groebel, Department of Media Psychology, Utrecht University, the Netherlands, noted in his speech and paper that child pornography has been an issue since the invention of the media. However, the Internet offers easier, more anonymous access with no immediate threat of prosecution. He further noted that more research should be devoted to the international aspects of this problem:

- How far-reaching is the problem world-wide?
- How do the various national legislative frameworks and policies deal with the problem?
- How far-reaching is the international circulation, what kinds of images of children are available as 'commercial products' and what are the characteristics of this trade?
- Under what circumstances are children exposed to becoming victims of pornography?
- Are there any effective preventive measures, apart from legal proceedings, that could contribute to solving the problem (e.g., media education, information to parents, etc.)?

The collection and distribution of child pornography can be seen as the end of a much broader array of activities. The research team is co-operating with the police in London and Amsterdam. From a law enforcement perspective, what is now needed is an extension to relate to actual offending. Can one predict from a content analysis of child pornography collections anything about the dangerousness of the individuals concerned? Do collections, the process of collecting, tell us anything about offence liability, or provide the basis for risk assessment? The research team is currently engaged in further exploring these issues.

Not to forget, there are an unknown number of people engaged in the passive monitoring and downloading of images and information. All the evidence is that many people at least browse in this area, if not actively downloading. The easy accessibility and transnational distribution of child pornography and rationalisations for child sex has broader implications in the context of sexualising children to an audience who may not have any primary interest in child sex per se. The children depicted in child pornography pictures are engaged in sexual behaviour, and are directed by the photographer to behave in specific ways that serve to sexualise children, in order to gratify a whole range of fantasies. The result is that children engaged in sex acts are often smiling or have neutral expressions; very rarely do children in child pornographic pictures show signs of discomfort. These depictions appear to be designed to reinforce rationalisation and justification processes for adult sexual interest in children. To the wider audience the pictures depict children as 'willing sexual beings'.■

Representatives of Organizations Presenting Papers

Presentations of papers at the UNESCO Expert Meeting were made by representatives of the organizations below. These and other papers by, e.g., Interpol and the Police are available online on the web site: http://www.unesco.org/webworld/child_screen/documents. html

Many of the organizations' web sites have useful links. For more links, see also UNESCO's web site: http://www. unesco.org/webworld/child_screen/links.html ***and*** *CRIN's (Child Rights Information Network) web site: http://www.crin.org/wcacsec.htm*

AFA – L'Association des Fournisseurs d'Accès et de Services Internet, is the French Internet Services Providers Association. Fax: +33 1 4102 8001. Web site: http://www.afa-france.com

ANPPCAN – is the African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect. Fax: +254 2 721999. Web site: http://www.africaonline.co.ke/anppcan

BERTELSMANN FOUNDATION – strives to contribute to the solution of current social problems in different countries, focusing on for example, economy, government, media, politics, medicine and health services, and cultural activities. Web site: http://www.stiftung.bertelsmann.de

CASA ALIANZA – is an organisation dedicated to the rehabilitation and defence of street children in Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua. Fax: +506 224 5689. Web site: http://www.casa-alianza.org

CEDECA, Bahia – Centro de Defesa da Criança e do Adolescente da Bahia – has a mission to fight all kinds of sexual exploitation and violence against children. E-mail: cedeca@ongba.org.br Web site: http://zumbi.ongba.org.br/org/cedeca/home.html

CHILDREN'S HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE OF ALBANIA – works with the protection of children's rights in Albania, on the basis of national and international laws. Fax: +355 42 307 60. E-mail: crca@adanet.com.al

CYBERANGELS – is an international safety program with the goal to find and report illegal material online. It educates families about online safety and how to enjoy cyberspace together. Cyberangels also works with schools and libraries. Fax: +1 201 845 6688. Web site: http://www. cyberangels. org

ECPAT – End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography, and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes. ECPAT's mission is to cover all forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children world-wide. The network is active in more than 40 countries. Fax: +662 215 8272. Web site: http://www.ecpat.net

FOCAL POINT ON SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN and NGO group for the CRC (the Convention on the Rights of the Child) – works to co-ordinate with the global monitoring mechanism, UN organs, specialised agencies and other governmental bodies to fight child sexual abuse, violence and exploitation. Fax: +41 22 740 11 45. Web site: http://www.childhub.ch/dcifp/focalpoint. html

HRI - Human Rights Internet – supports the work of the global non-governmental community in its struggle to obtain human rights for all. Fax: +1 613 789 7414. Web site: http://www.hri.ca

IFJ – International Federation of Journalists – promotes co-ordinated international action to defend press freedom and social justice through the development of strong, free and independent trade unions of journalists. Fax:+32 2 219 29 76. Web site: http://www.ifj.org

INTERNATIONAL BUREAU FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS – works to protect, defend and promote the rights and the welfare of all children in every corner of the globe. The organization has created the International Tribunal for Children's Rights to conduct inquiries, consult experts and propose concrete solutions to serious international children's rights issues. Fax: +1 514 932 9453. Web site: http://www. web. net/~tribunal/index.html

ISPCAN – International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect – is a multidisciplinary international organization that brings together a world-wide cross-section of committed professionals to work globally towards the prevention and treatment of child abuse, neglect and exploitation. Fax:+1 312 321 1405. Web site: http://ispcan.org

IWF – Internet Watch Foundation – addresses the problem of illegal material on the Internet. Its aim is to enhance the enormous potential of the Internet to inform, educate, entertain and conduct business, by hindering the use of the Internet to transmit illegal material, particularly child pornography, and by encouraging the classification of legal material. Web site: http://www. iwf.org.uk

MAPI – Movement Against Paedophilia on the Internet is an organisation of researchers working against paedophilia and child pornography on the Internet. MAPI's objectives are to promote interdisciplinary research, and to inform and give recommendations to the Internet users. Web site: http://www.info.fundp.ac.be/~mapi/mapi-fr.html

PEACE – Protecting the Environment and Children Everywhere, Sri Lanka. Fax: +94 150 2081. Web site: http://www.ecpat.net

PREDA Foundation Inc., Philippines – has a mission to work for just laws and their implementation that will empower the poor. PREDA assists sexually abused and exploited children and women. Fax: +63 47 22 39 628. Web site: http://www.jubileecampaign.demon.co.uk/children/predadex.htm

DECLARATION AND ACTION PLAN ON SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN, CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AND PAEDOPHILIA ON THE INTERNET, issued at Expert Meeting, UNESCO

Declaration

The Internet provides a new world for curious children. It offers entertainment, opportunities for education, information and communication. The Internet is a tool that opens a window of opportunities, but it is available only to a tiny minority of the world's children. Today only five percent of children have access to the Internet and most of these live in the developed regions of the world. This information gap between have and have not countries must be closed.

As Internet use grows, so do the risks of children being exposed to inappropriate material, in particular, criminal activity by paedophiles and child pornographers. While the benefits of the Internet far outweigh its potential drawbacks, these dangers cannot be ignored. If left unanswered they pose a threat to children and will become the object of resistance to future Internet use.

We believe that future use of the Internet will be determined by the next generation who have been born into a digital society and are beginning to think, work, play and learn in fundamentally different ways from their parents. In this current period of transition, however, the use and development of digital technologies must take account of current social, cultural and democratic values.

Above all, we need to know more about what is available, its accessibility, the content, how many and which people consume it. To date, not enough is known about the scale or extent of paedophile activities on the net, their consequences and impact on young people.

Child protection on the Internet is not a matter of censorship. Creating a safe environment for children online must preserve and enhance fundamental liberties, such as freedom of expression, freedom of information and the right to privacy, while ensuring their right to protection from harmful and illegal material.

The fight against paedophilia and child pornography on the Internet requires a coalition of forces involving children, industry, policy makers, educators and parents to ensure that users are aware of the potential dangers and have available to them the necessary means to combat these threats.

Action against illegal content needs industry co-operation in restricting circulation and a fully functioning system of self-regulation aiming at a high level of protection, which must go hand in hand with effective law enforcement. Harmful content needs to be treated differently from that which is clearly illegal.

In this spirit, we have identified concrete measures which are needed in order to encourage an environment favourable to the development a child-friendly Internet. The following Action Plan requires strategic approach which is both global and inclusive, and carries with it the commitment of all the actors, in particular governments, to ensure a framework of coordination, financial resources and political support. We request the Director-General to bring this text and Action Plan to the attention of the Member States of UNESCO, the National Commissions and the General Conference.

Paris, 19 January 1999

Action Plan

INTRODUCTION

While the Action Plan is addressed primarily to UNESCO, it contains elements which must be taken up by all actors in the fight against paedophilia on the Internet. Governments, international agencies, NGOs, industry, educators, parents, law enforcement agencies and media all have a role to play but special effort should be made to ensure that the voice of children is also heard in the elaboration of strategies to make the Internet safe. UNESCO's role in this joint effort should be primarily that of a catalyst.

RESEARCH, AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

Within its field of competence, UNESCO has a specific role and responsibility for action. In particular, a clearing house should be established for the exchange of information and to promote cooperation among groups concerned with child rights.

Declaration and Action Plan, continuing overleaf...

Action Plan, continuing...

UNESCO educational, cultural and communication programmes should take up the issues raised at this meeting and in particular should:

- Sponsor and develop initiatives for the use of technical means to combat harmful materials, particularly through the use of filters and self rating systems;
- Promote existing screening tools which make children and adults aware of how to protect themselves; and
- Sponsor information campaigns which raise public awareness of the harm suffered by children who have been sexually abused and identify such abuse as an abuse of power.

In addition UNESCO should:

- Design and support research programmes systematically in partnership with research institutions, to obtain a clearer, comprehensive and more up-to-date understanding of the problem of paedophilia on the Internet;
- Disseminate information among researchers, and promote exchange of information with child care and child protection organizations, ISPs, web masters, police and judicial institutions, media practitioners, citizens' and civic groups and other client groups;
- Commission the preparation of a comprehensive glossary of terms concerning the Internet and its operations so that users and specialists can arrive at a common understanding of this valuable informational and networking facility;
- Support and encourage national "hotlines" and the creation of networks of hotlines or an international "electronic watchtower" which provide the immediate possibility for children to get help;
- Develop media and Internet education, information and awareness strategies to sensitize children, parents, teachers, educational institutions, social workers, media and politicians;
- Involve mothers/parents associations in this communication strategy and create a world network of strategic citizens and personalities, institutions and industry against paedophilia on Internet;
- Develop a common long-term strategy where a child-friendly cultural climate is created and the idea of a virtual civil society is promoted.

LAW AND REGULATION

UNESCO's role regarding law and regulations should be developed according to the following framework:

1. **Targeted regulation** to be used by those who are against child pornography including support for anti-child pornography laws covering possession.
2. **Self-regulation** to be taken as an industry response and ethical guidelines to encourage the industry's broader participation.
3. **Co-regulation**, which implies that regulation with the backing of governments, NGOs, industry and civil society should also be possible.

UNESCO in co-operation with others should set up a Task Force or Experts Committee bringing together experiences from all sectors concerned by sexual abuse and pornography to protect children on the Internet. This action oriented body should consider the following issues:

Prevention:

- Promote awareness for the protection of children online among all actors concerned and particularly including law-making bodies and law enforcement agencies.

Collecting information:

- Collect legal information of all kinds related to child pornography online including in the information glossary industry and legal definitions and terminology on children rights, child pornography and sexual abuses on children.

Disseminating information:

- Widely disseminate and publicise throughout the Internet the information collected on legal issues related to child pornography online, making use of international observatories or clearing houses.

Analysis:

- Conduct studies on legal issues related to child pornography online.

Action Plan, continuing overleaf...

Action Plan, continuing...

Self-regulation:

- Study the efficiency of self-regulation.
- Promote industry and private sector initiatives to develop codes of ethics on child pornography online working in parallel with judiciary experts worldwide.
- Study the ISP's role related to how paedophile networks are used.
- Promote dialogue among all actors concerned, governments and ISPs to balance soft-law efforts.

Law-making:

- Promote legal harmonisation, as well as international co-operation between the legal profession and the police.
- Study the relevance and feasibility of an international legal framework to protect children online under the auspices of UNESCO, among other legal issues.

International co-operation and law enforcement:

- Promote appropriate standards for law enforcement and international co-operation, in co-ordination with ISPs.
- Establishment of some international principles or standards.

Paris, 19 January 1999

Innocence in Danger

Innocence in Danger – a world-wide movement of concerned citizens and specialists in child safety on the Internet – was established to work out ways of implementing the Action Plan, adopted at the UNESCO Expert Meeting, January 1999. Ms Homayra Sellier is the President of this International Action Committee.

The committee met at UNESCO in April 1999, and discussed in concrete terms ways to protect children online through the creation of a global website of information and contacts on child safety; preparation of educational materials for children, parents and teachers; and strengthening legislation on crimes against children. A major observation shared by all was the need to join forces, share information and resources and bring to bear each person's and each institution's unique expertise. The movement is open to those who have expertise or resources to contribute to making the Internet safe for children.

A UNESCO seminar with a progress report from *Innocence in Danger* was held in Paris on June 21, 1999.

For further information on the movement see web site: http://www.unesco.org/webworld/child_screen/news_150499. html

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and **Children**

Media Image
Education
Participation

The Clearinghouse Yearbook 1999

This second Yearbook brings together researchers, teachers, media professionals and representatives of voluntary organizations in different parts of the world, all of whom have devoted their creativity and energies to the development of media education and media participation among children.

Cecilia von Feilitzen & Ulla Carlsson (Eds). *Children and Media: Image, Education, Participation.* Unesco International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen, NORDICOM, Göteborg University, 483 p., ISBN 91-630-7875-9, Price paperback: £20, $30 (free of charge for persons in the Clearinghouse Network).

In conjunction with the Yearbook 1999, the Clearinghouse has published *Bibliography – Children and Media Violence Research. A Selection (1989 –).* 1999, 44 p., ISSN 1403-4700 (included in the price of the Yearbook).

To order, please contact: Nordicom, Göteborg University, P.O. Box 713, SE – 405 30 GÖTEBORG, Sweden, Fax: +46 31 773 46 55, E-mail: pia.hepsever@nordicom.gu.se

Joint EU Action Against Child Pornography

ANNA CELSING
Free-lance Journalist, Belgium

In December 1998, the EU Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs decided to take joint action to combat child pornography on the Internet.

In the future, EU member states shall "ensure the widest possible cooperation" to facilitate effective investigation and prosecution of such offences, mainly through Interpol and Europol. Also, they shall examine the possibility of organising regular meetings of authorities specialising in the fight against child pornography.

The member states shall examine appropriate measures – voluntary or legally binding – to eliminate child pornography on the Internet and exchange experiences on the effectiveness of any measures taken.

They may, for instance, prompt Internet providers to withdraw from circulation child pornography material of which they have been informed or are aware, and advise them to set up their own control systems for combating the production, processing, distribution and possession of such material.

Furthermore, EU member states shall encourage Internet users to inform law enforcement authorities on suspected distribution of child pornography on the Internet and ensure that the authorities act swiftly when they have received such information. They shall also encourage, if possible, the production of filters and other technical means to prevent the distribution of child pornography.

Just before Christmas 1998, the Council of the European Union adopted a financial plan to support such measures. With a total budget of 25 million Euro for 1999-2002, this "Action Plan to promote safer use of the Internet" will provide support for, inter alia, the creation of a European network of hot-lines for handling complaints about illegal content, developing filtering and rating systems and various awareness actions to be carried out by the member states.

More information about the Action Plan can be found on the Internet: http://www2.echo.lu/iap

THE EUROPEAN UNION ACTION PLAN ON PROMOTING SAFER USE OF THE INTERNET (summary)

Since the Action Plan is extensive – a complete text can be found in Decision No 276/1999/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 January 1999 – we here reproduce a summary of the Action Plan from the press release:

The Internet is revolutionising a number of economic sectors and is becoming a powerful element in social, educational and cultural fields. Never before has such vast amounts of information and services been available to the citizens. New forms of communication are developing and participation in interest groups is made available to everyone.

The aim of the Action Plan is to ensure implementation of the various European Union initiatives on how to deal with undesirable content on the Internet. The proposal is a financial plan designed to support non-regulatory initiatives for promoting safer use of the Internet. It is important to emphasise that the vast majority of Internet content poses absolutely no problem. However, since the Internet can, nevertheless, be used for distribution of illegal and harmful content, these issues must be addressed if the consumers and industry of Europe are to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the Information society. More in particular, parents and teachers are concerned by the availability of content, which could be harmful for children.

The Action Plan is specifically aimed at actions where financial support from the Community is necessary. It is written in co-operation with users, the Internet industry and Member States' governments and builds on political consensus within the Union. The objectives of the plan are to:

- incite the actors (industry, users) to develop and implement adequate systems of self-regulation;
- strengthen developments by supporting demonstrations and stimulating application of technical solutions;
- alert and inform parents and teachers, in particular through their relevant associations;
- foster co-operation and exchange of experiences and best practices;
- promote co-ordination across Europe and between actors concerned;
- ensure compatibility between the approach taken in Europe and elsewhere.

The European Union Action Plan, continuing overleaf...

The European Union Action Plan, continuing...

The Action Plan sets forth a number of measures in four action lines:

1. Creating a safe environment (through industry self-regulation)
2. Developing filtering and rating systems
3. Encouraging awareness actions
4. Support actions

Co-ordination with other initiatives

Actions will be closely co-ordinated with the 24 September 1998 Council Recommendation on the promotion of common guidelines for the implementation, at national level, of a self-regulation framework for the protection of minors and human dignity in audio-visual and on-line information services.*

The Action Plan will be implemented in consultation with the Internet industry, users and Member States. Contacts with multinational bodies, will be continued to make international efforts coherent. The use of existing networks established under other programs will be promoted to disseminate information about technical legal and other solutions.

21 December 1998

* THE EUROPEAN UNION RECOMMENDATION ON THE PROTECTION OF MINORS AND HUMAN DIGNITY IN AUDIOVISUAL AND INFORMATION SERVICES, which is a legal act (98/560/EC), covers all electronic media. The full text of the Recommendation is published in the *Official Journal of the European Communities* L 270 of 07.10.1998, p. 48, and can be found via the web site: http://europa.eu.int/geninfo/query_en.htm

EU and US Conference on Combating Child Pornography

Within the context of the transatlantic dialogue between the European Union and the United States, an international conference on *Combating Child Pornography on the Internet* is scheduled for September 29 - October 1, 1999 in Vienna. The conference is based on an initiative by the Foreign Ministers of Austria and the US – Wolfgang Schüssel and Madeleine Albright. Because the large majority of Internet users and the main Internet service providers are based in the US and Europe, the United States and the European Union are joining efforts to combat this crime which has spread dramatically over the past years.

Austria will host the conference, which is co-sponsored by the US, and organized with the support of the European Union. High-level officials from the Ministries of Interior and Justice, the judiciary and the police, as well as representatives of international and regional organizations, the industry, especially Internet service providers, NGOs and experts will be invited.

The objectives of the conference are as follows:

- reinforcing co-operation among law-enforcement officials and the judiciary,
- establishing voluntary self-regulatory mechanisms (codes of conduct) among Internet service providers,
- encouraging the establishment of further hotlines (hotlines enable citizens to report leads on child pornography found on the Internet) and of networking among existing hotlines.

Source: Ingrid Kircher, Department of International Law (I.A), Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Austria, Fax: +43 1 53185 212. E-mail: ingrid.kircher@wien.bmaa.gv.at

Recent Japanese Legislation

According to estimates from Interpol, most of the child pornography available on Internet sites world-wide originates in Japan. While most countries have laws that prohibit child pornography, Japan does not. Anyone who wants to buy, sell or produce such pictures can go to Japan. This lack of legislation frustrates global attempts to reduce child pornography. Japan's criminal law prohibits sex with minors, but taking indecent pictures of children is permissible. Only some specific pornography is banned under an obscenity code.

In the middle of April, 1999, new Japanese regulations crafted to control child pornography on the Net went into effect. However, it does not make possession of child pornography illegal. It requires distributors to register with the police – but threatens no penalties if they do not – and asks Internet service providers to remove objectionable material voluntarily.

Source: Time Magazine, April 19, 1999.

Developing Child, Developing Media

Sydney, Australia, July 20-21, 1999

This conference, organised by Young Media Australia (YMA) and the Institute for Values Research, will look at the ways media can help and hinder children's development.

Participants from around the world are welcome.

For further information:
Institute for Values Research, New College, University of New South Wales, Sydney 2052, AUSTRALIA, Tel: +61 2 9381 1730, Fax: +61 2 9381 1909, E-mail: values@newcollege.unsw.edu.au Web site: http://www.youngmedia.org. au

Media Education Research Section of IAMCR

Leipzig, Germany, July 27-31, 1999
Singapore, July 15-20, 2000

The Media Education Research Section of IAMCR (The International Association for Media and Communication Research) has promoted research in the subject for more than a decade, and the papers that will be presented in Leipzig deal with both the theoretical and practical aspects of Media Education in different countries.

For further information:
Dr. Keval J. Kumar, Resource Centre for Media Education and Research, 4 Chintamani Apts, Kale Path, Bhandarkar Rd., Pune 411004, INDIA, Tel/Fax: +91 20 565 1018, E-mail: kevalkumar@hotmail.co Web site: http://www. uni-leipzig.de/~iamcr

Second World Congress on International Education, Integration and Development

Buenos Aires, Argentina, July 28-30, 1999

Learning to Live Together is the theme of this congress which is organized by the International Education Permanent Forum for the Integration and Development of Nations and the Business University of Argentina (UADE), under the auspices of UNESCO.

The congress will treat three main areas: International Education; Development, Globalization and Integration, including Communications Media and Information Technology; and Culture and Education for the Third Millenium.

For further information:
UADE - Congress Office, Lima 717, 1073 Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA, Tel: +54 11 4379 7694, Fax: +54 11 4379 7639, E-mail: coneduc@uade.edu.ar Web Site: http://www.uade.edu.ar/coneduc

The TV We Watch, The TV We Want – A TV que vemos, a TV que queremos

São Paulo, Brazil, Aug. 4-6, 1999

This all Latin American meeting on high quality TV is promoted by Serviço Social do Comércio (SESC), with joint support of the Goethe Institute, the Prix Jeunesse Foundation (Germany), News Agency for Children's Rights (ANDI), UNICEF and the Vitae Foundation.

After the opening session, six conferences and debates will be held on the following themes: Quality TV and Cultural Identity; TV and Social Impacts; TV and Children's Education; TV, Children and Teenagers; TV Organization Models; and How to Support Quality TV.

For further information:
Beth Carmona, BRAZIL, Fax: +55 11 828 0697, E-mail: bcarmona@uninet.com.br

Third International Newspapers in Education Conference

Paris, France, Sept. 5-8, 1999

The 3rd International Newspapers in Education Conference – *Reading for Life* – will examine the ways newspapers around the world are fighting to capture the attention, interest and loyalty of the young.

The conference, which is organized by Newspapers in Education (NIE) and the World Association of Newspapers (WAN), will also explore the ever-changing challenge facing newspapers in the vital effort to help citizens create and maintain democratic societies. Finally, there will be a wide array of issues as part of the celebration of the International Literacy Day.

The World Young Reader Prize will recognize the newspaper which has devised the most innovative programme or activity to develop young readership in the previous year.

For further information:
Dr. Aralynn Abare McMane, WAN, 25, rue d'Astorg, 75008 Paris, FRANCE, Fax: 331 47 42 49 48, E-mail: mcmane@wan.asso.fr

National Children's Film Festival 1999

Indianapolis, USA, Oct. 8-10, 1999

The National Children's Film Festival (NCFF) is an international festival dedicated to young people creating their own films and videos, expressing what is of interest and significance to them.

For further information:
National Children's Film Festival, P.O. Box 88500, Indianapolis, IN 46208-0500, USA, Tel: +1 317 464 1360, Fax: +1 317 464 1450, Web site: http://www.childrensfilmfest.org

Children and Violence: Our Individual, Family and Collective Responsibilities

Montreal, Canada, Oct. 13-15, 1999

The Organization for the Protection of Children Rights of Canada (O.P.C.R.) is organizing the Fourth International Conference on the Child.

Over 150 speakers from 25 different countries will present at the conference, which includs several workshops on children, media and violence.

For further information:
Angela Ficca, O.P.C.R., 5167 Jean-Talon East, Suite 370, Montreal, Quebec, H1S 1K8, CANADA, Tel: +1 514 593 4303, Fax: +1 514 593 4659, E-mail: aficca@osde.ca

KID SCREEN 1999

Como, Italy, Oct. 17-19, 1999

This annual international meeting on children's film and media education is organized by the European Children's Film Association (E.C.F.A.) with support of the Cultural Department of the Lombardy Region, Italy.

The theme of this year's meeting is *Violence on the Screen*. For the first time

there will be a Kid Screen-Digital Prize.

For further information:
Dr. Eva Schwarzwald, Cinematographic and Audiovisual Bureau, Regione Lombardia, Piazza IV Novembre 5, 20124 Milano, ITALY, Fax: +39 2 676 527 35, E-mail: schwarzwalde@regione.lombardia.it

Children's Day of Broadcasting

Sunday, Dec. 12, 1999

Since 1992, the International Children's Day of Broadcasting has been a yearly celebration of the enormous creative potential of children around the world.

With over 2,000 broadcasters taking part around the globe, the Day is an opportunity for children to shape their own vision of the world, through radio and television.

For further information:
William Hetzer, UNICEF, Division of Communication, 3 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA, Tel: +1 212 326 7290, Fax: +1 212 326 7731, E-mail: whetzer @unicef.org Web site: http://www.unicef. org/icdb

Second Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media

Dhaka, Bangladesh, planned for March 14-16, 2000

About 200 participants from 27 countries in East, Southeast and South Asia are expected to attend the Second Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media. The Summit will be co-hosted by the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Women's & Children's Affairs, Government of Bangladesh. The National Organising Committee also includes the UNICEF Office for Bangladesh.

The main theme of the Summit is *Investing in Children in the New Century*. The objectives are: 1. To increase understanding of the need for sustained investment in realizing child rights; 2. To review the progress made in Asia in meeting the Goals set out at the World Summit for Children; 3. To examine how media report on children's issues and cater to children's needs; 4. To identify activities that will enhance media's leadership role, including child participation in the media; 5. To share examples of best practices among the media, towards standards setting for quality reporting on children's and women's issues.

For further information:
June Kunugi and Romel Sabbir Ahmed, Information & Advocacy Section, UNICEF, Bangladesh, BSL Office Complex, 1 Minto Road, GPO Box 58, BD - Dhaka 1000, BANGLADESH, Tel: +88 02 933 6701-20, Fax: +88 02 933 5641-2, E-mail: romel_ ahmed@mail.unicef.bangla.net

SUMMIT 2000: Children, Youth and the Media – Beyond the Millennium

Toronto, Canada, May 13-17, 2000

SUMMIT 2000 will be an international opportunity for those who teach media to meet and talk with those who make it.

The conference program will consist of three sections: the *Media* section relating to the programming, production and distribution of television, film and new media for children and youth; *Media Education* for those involved in media education; and the *Academic* part which will present papers relating to media and media education.

For further information:
SUMMIT 2000, 60 St. Clair Avenue East, Suite 1003, Toronto, Ontario M4T 1N5, CANADA Tel: +1 416 515 0466, Fax: +1 416 515 0467, E-mail: summit2000@interlog.com Web site: http://www.summit2000.net

27th IBBY World Congress: The New World for a New World – Children's Books for the New Millenium

Cartagena de Indias, Colombia Sept. 18-22, 2000

IBBY's (the International Board on Books for Young People) biennial congresses are the most important meeting points for IBBY members and other people involved in children's books and reading.

For further information:
Silvia Castrillón, Fundalectura, Colombian Section of IBBY, Apartado 048902, Av. (Calle) 40, No 16-46, Bogotá D.C., COLOMBIA, Tel. +57 1 320 15 11, Fax +57 1 287 70 71, E-mail: fundalec@impsat.net.co Web site: http://www.ibby.org

Second International Forum of Researchers: Young People and the Media – Tomorrow. Issues and Outlook.

Sydney, Australia, Nov. 27-Dec. 1, 2000

Sydney 2000 will provide a forum for dialogue and interaction between members of the research community and those groups, such as regulators, producers and educators, which use the results of the studies.

Proposed themes for the meeting are: globalization and socialisation; policy and regulation of media for young people; new research methodologies; and youth production and consumption of media. Deadline for proposals for themes and workshops is July 16, 1999.

For further information:
Research Section, Australian Broadcasting Authority, P.O. Box Q500, Queen Victoria Building, Sydney, NSW 1230, AUSTRALIA, Tel: +61 2 9334 7700, Fax +61 2 9334 7799, E-mail: research@aba.gov.au Web site: http://www.aba.gov.au

Third World Summit on Media for Children

Thessaloniki, Greece, March 11-15, 2001

The 3rd World Summit on Media for Children is planned for meeting the interests of the audiovisual professionals from around the world.

The four themes of the Summit are: Which is the political decision that will determine the audiovisual future of our children? Which is the big world of countries with less opportunities in audiovisual development? Which are the promises of the advanced technology? and Do children have a saying?

Media Talks on Children is an on-line service for preparation of the Summit, see the web site: http://www.childrens-media.org

For further information:
Alexandros Athanassiadis, E.C.T.C., 20 Analipseos str., Vrilissia, 152 35 Athens, GREECE, Tel: +30 1 68 51 258, Fax: +30 1 68 17 987, E-mail: summit@childrens-media.org

NEW ADDRESS?

Please contact: Pia Hepsever
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THE CLEARINGHOUSE IS TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND EFFECTIVIZE KNOWLEDGE ON CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND MEDIA VIOLENCE SEEN IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD.

Göteborg University

Nordic Council of Ministers

NORDICOM

Nordic Information Center for Media and Communication Research

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News from ICCVOS

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

2-3 1999

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We welcome...

researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organisations and interested individuals to the Clearinghouse information network. As a participant you will receive our publications (in English) with the contributions of other network participants from all parts of the globe. (Participation is free of charge.)

***The value of the Clearinghouse as a forum** rests in the breadth of its coverage and the commitment of its participants. In short: the more relevant information we gather, and the more who contribute from all continents, the better our services.*

***We are interested in** research related to children, young people and media violence, children's access to media and their media use, media education, media for children, children's participation in the media, and in documentation of measures and activities of relevance to this field.*

***News briefs and short articles to our newsletter**, "News from ICCVOS", will be greatly valued, as will notices of coming and recent conferences, seminars and other events; of new publications; and of active associations and organisations with children and media in view.*

***We are also grateful for receiving relevant publications and materials** — if possible, two copies of each, please! They will be documented at the Clearinghouse into a growing knowledge base for overviews, compilations and bibliographies of interest to various groups of users.*

***As for publications and materials in other languages** than English, French, German and Spanish, we kindly ask you for complementary translations of the titles.*

***We look forward to hearing from you**, not least regarding any requests or suggestions you may have concerning Clearinghouse services. And we hope that you will appreciate our efforts – as a means of making your own work known in wider circles, and as a way to keep abreast of others' work.*

News from
ICCVOS

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Violence and Brutality on Television in Hungary

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The introduction of a dual media system in Hungary in the fall of 1997, marked by the appearance of upstart commercial television channels, was accompanied by an explosive increase in programme offerings, above all in the realm of fiction. Before long, voices in the public sphere began expressing concern about both quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the transformation of Hungarian broadcasting, and particularly about the increasing number of programmes containing violence.

The First Hungarian Content Analysis

In order to look at this subject empirically, the National Radio and Television Commission (ORTT) initiated the present study, a content analysis that was carried out in 1998, as the first comprehensive research effort on this topic in Hungary. It was decided that the analysis would include the entire realm of non-musical, fictional programming, as well as the trailers for such programmes, during morning and prime time hours.[1] Five broadcast outlets, those whose potential reach includes the greatest number of television households in the country, were included in the study. Two of these are public service broadcasters, while three are commercial stations.[2] The period of programming examined extended from July 27th until August 2nd, when schools closed for vacation.

The object of the study was to delineate the extent and nature of the violence portrayed. We defined violence as being interpersonal, direct and physical in nature, including verbal violence when it contained threats of physical violence. Indirect or latent violence (such as structural violence), which are difficult to analyse empirically, were not included.

In developing a category system, a model used for studying violence on television in Germany[3] served as the basis. We decided to look at television violence on three levels: in the programme, in the sequence, and the aggressive act.

Beyond measuring the extent, frequency and nature of violence in TV fiction, we wanted to use the analysis of violent portrayals, and their different types and forms, in order to develop a catalogue of criteria for portrayals characterised by particularly destructive patterns of behaviour. Thus, we wanted to identify fictional violence with considerable potential for having a negative impact on the audience. Therefore, significance was attached not only to the type and intensity of a specific (aggressive) act, but also to the situation in which the act is presented, as well as to arguable justifications for the aggression, consequences of the aggressive act, the degree of realism with which the violence is portrayed, and so forth.

Extent of Violence in Fictional Programming

Some findings were: In 66 per cent of the 261 fiction programmes analysed, at least one incident of violence was portrayed. More than half of the 669 trailers analysed contained acts of violence.

Most violence was found in feature films and television movies – 77 per cent of which contained violence. Cartoons followed, with 71 per cent including violent acts. The same was valid for 60 per cent of the dramatic and comedic series.

The 261 programmes corresponded to a net broadcast time (i.e., excluding commercials and trailers) of 155.6 hours. The amount of *time* devoted to exclusively violent acts was approximately 8.6 hours, equivalent to 5.5 per cent of the net broadcast time for all programmes examined. It is remarkable that, in terms of the duration of violence in all the programmes, violence on the commercial channels was roughly twice that of the public service channels.

An Acronym and a "New" Newsletter

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen is our name, but we will be calling ourselves ICCVOS, an acronym. We have taken the opportunity to rename and redesign our newsletter, which we hope our readers will continue to find useful.

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Notes

1. For the purposes of this study, non-musical, fiction programming includes feature films (originally intended for cinema), television movies, dramatic and comedic series, cartoons, theatrical plays, puppet shows and trailers for such programming. Morning programming aired 9-12 a.m. on weekdays, and 7-12 a.m. on weekends was analysed. Prime time hours were set to 6-10 p.m. In order to ascertain whether or not weekend broadcasts displayed any peculiar characteristics vis-à-vis weekday programming, Saturday broadcasts aired 12-6 p.m. and 10-12 p.m. were also analysed.

2. Public-service stations: MTV 1, Duna TV; commercial stations: TV 2, RTL Klub, TV 3.

3. Jo Groebel and Uli Gleich (1993), *Gewaltprofil des deutschen Fernseh-programmens. Eine Analyse des Angebots privater und öffentlich-rechlicher Sender*, Opladen: Leske und Budrich.

The most violent programme genre, in terms of time devoted to portrayal of violence, was that of cartoons, in which 8.8 per cent of broadcast time consisted of violent acts, compared with 5.7 per cent of broadcast time for films, and 4.6 per cent for dramatic series.

The programmes examined contained 842 *sequences* featuring violent acts. This is equivalent to 3.2 sequences per programme, or 5.4 per broadcast hour. Cartoons were found to include the most, with 11.8 sequences per hour. For films, the rate was 3.6 per hour, while for dramatic series it was 4.4 per hour.

The programmes contained 2,030 *acts* of violence, equivalent to 7.8 per programme, and 13 per hour. Cartoons averaged 26 violent acts per hour, compared with 9.6 for films, and 11 for dramatic series.

Considering the facts that the audience for cartoons consists primarily of children, and that cartoons were found to devote a higher proportion of their broadcast time to portrayals of violence, to feature more sequences including violence and more acts of violence per hour than any other type of non-musical, fictional television programme, the aforementioned findings must be viewed as a serious cause for concern among those paying attention to child welfare.

Types of Violence in Fictional Programming

The qualitative aspect of the study yielded numerous valuable findings, of which only a few can be alluded to here, owing to space limitations.

An analysis of arguable justifications (e.g., instrumental, destructive, reactive) for aggressive acts – considering justifications readily identifiable in the same sequence as the acts themselves – **showed that in approximately 20 per cent of all sequences containing violence, the acts portrayed could be judged as 'violence for its own sake'.** Of this number, roughly half (i.e., 10 per cent of all violent sequences) can be said to have been characterised by an intention to destroy, featuring perpetrators deriving recognisable pleasure from their violent acts. Of the sequences portraying destructive intentions and enjoyment of violence, one third occurred in programming intended explicitly for children. And in one quarter of all violent sequences, there was no indication whatsoever as to why violence was being employed.

Consequences of violence, such as physical pain and injury or psychological damage, which might generate sympathy for victims on the part of the viewer, were seldom featured or, alternatively, trivialised or unrealistically presented. In 54 per cent of all sequences containing violence (including trailers), victims or objects of the violent acts were not seen to suffer injury or psychological distress, while in 21 per cent of all violent sequences, no victim or object of the featured violence was shown at all.

One of the most significant findings, in terms of portrayals of violence and their potential effects in the context of learning theory, was that the use of violence was generally shown to entail no negative consequences for the aggressor. In more than 90 per cent of all sequences containing violence (there were only marginal differences between programme types, trailers included), the aggressor went unpunished within the sequence in which the act occurred, tending to support the notion that violence is a viable, efficient means by which aims might be achieved and conflicts resolved.■

Large Response to Public Hearing on Media Violence in India

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As a sequel to the publication of the summary of the UNESCO Global Study on Media Violence, UNESCO's New Delhi Office decided to call a Public Hearing. Recently conducted studies indicate that media violence is definitely on the rise on Indian television, and since such violence and its impact have become a matter of concern to the community, the theme of the Hearing and its timing were most apt. With news of how children are negatively affected by television images filtering into newspapers, the Government, the judiciary, educationists, parents, psychiatrists, teachers and others are starting to take a serious look at an issue that had so far raised no eyebrows in the country.

UNESCO joined hands with UNICEF, the UN Information Centre and the India International Centre in New Delhi to invite channel heads, advertisers, producers of both horror and non-horror serials, directors, psychologists, parents and school principals as panellists for the event on 5 December 1998. Chaired by Ms Sai Paranjpye, a film and theatre director and writer and currently President of Children's Film Society, the Hearing was widely attended and evoked instant response. The intense question and answer sessions following the interventions of the panellists were proof of the degree of involvement people felt in an issue that affected their children daily, if unknowingly.

TV Violence in India

According to media critic and analyst Ms Shailaja Bajpai who wrote a theme paper for the Hearing,

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there were some 60 million TV owing households in India in 1998. This represents an audience of anything between 250-300 million. On the 50-odd channels now available, 30 films and 55 serials are telecast daily, giving the viewer an incredible choice of entertainment. Ms Bajpai stated that not only suspense thrillers but dramas, serials and comedies, too, are suffused with large doses of violence.

That violence is common currency on Indian television was clear from a study of five channels over 9 days. Ms Akhila Sivadas of the Centre for Advocacy and Research who conducted this monitoring study for UNESCO counted 759 distinct incidents of violence on Doordarshan (India's state-owned national channel), Doordarshan Metro, Zee, Sony & Star Plus, with Zee in the lead, throwing up with 365 violent incidents as against DD Metro's 62. A ten-minute film made by Orange Cat Productions, that put together images of violence from across channels and programmes, and interviewed a wide range of people, including children, set out the parameters of the debate.

Ms Sivadas' study enumerated 59 varieties of violence – audio, visual, physical and psychological. Threats, slapping, screaming, shooting, assaulting, uttering expletives, clobbering, stabbing, mental torture, eerie sound tracks and threatening sound music were de rigueur on all programmes on all channels. The principal areas of concern for a media analyst like her were as follows: programme schedules, violent promos, visualisation of violence, treatment of issues, gender-based violence, the role of companies and sponsors specializing in children's products and supporting such programmes, and children's response to programmes.

For instance, serials such as *Shapath*, *Aahat*, *Shaktiman*, *Anhonee* and *Kohra*, all horror or violence-ridden, were sponsored by Cadburys (confectioners), Johnson's (baby products), Kissan (jam, squashes & ketchups), Parle-G (biscuits), Chyawanprash (health supplements), Horlicks, Complan and other health drink makers. All these ads targeted children as their consumers.

Ms Sivadas observed that while serials on Indian television do not reward perpetrators of violence, in the conflict between good and evil violence is, in many cases, fought with violence, as, e.g., in *Yehi Hai Raaz*, *Kohra*, *X-Zone* and *Saturday Suspense*.

Most serials make no attempt to hide the fact that they regard children as prime viewers of horror and crime based programs. The study noted that *Aahat*, *Anhonee*, *Bhanwar*, *X-Zone* and *India Most Wanted* received top ratings for audio effects among the 4 to 6 age group!

A Code of Ethics

In his valedictory address, the Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Mr Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, said that many programmes compromised on quality, value and social relevance for purely commercial interests. Government, he maintained, was keen to regulate programmes beamed into Indian homes and to ensure that the country's moral and cultural fabric was not corrupted. It was planning to set up a code of ethics for satellite channels and to ensure compulsory up-linking from India for foreign broadcasters. (Since writing this, there has been a change of Government in India.) This code, he clarified, would not mean censoring or monitoring. However, he did criticize popularity ratings and wondered how these could give top marks to horror and crime based programmes.

Panellists acknowledged that there was a need to do something about the media violence, something in the nature of self-regulation. It now remains for the debate to be carried forward. Interestingly, the Delhi High Court has recently appointed a three member committee to look into incidents of suicide and/or aggression (both on others and on oneself) by children apparently inflamed by the popular serial *Shaktiman*. Shaktiman is the equivalent of Superman, a favorite hero of children who fights injustice and evil and helps good prevail. It is alleged that children have been imitating his antics and tricks; some suicides have been reported as well. The committee will look into the validity of these charges.■

Violence on the Screen — International Meeting on Children's Film and Media Education

by
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This heading was the theme of the fifth "Kid Screen", arranged by the European Children's Film Association (ECFA) and the Lombardy Region, Ministry of Culture, in Como, Italy, October 17-19, 1999.

ECFA has been active since 1988 in promoting quality films for children and in trying to foster ties between the film industry and the sector of culture and education in order to address the needs of young consumers. The seminar "Kid Screen" was established in 1994 by EFCA with the contribution of the Ministry of Culture of the Lombardy Region in Italy, one of the most active institutional members of the association. "Kid Screen" is a meeting point for training and exchanging ideas, not least for teachers and film professionals. Last year, "Kid Screen Digital Kids" was also set up, an international film competition for child and adult producers.

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Media Violence Not Only a Demon

As pointed out by the organisers, Eva Schwarzwald of Regione Lombardia, and Domenico Lucchini, President of EFCA, when introducing the theme of this year's "Kid Screen", it is important not only to regard media violence as a demon but also to accept its positive aspects.

Many of the speeches given by invited researchers, politicians, media professionals, psychoanalysts and others, were varied and thought provoking, indeed. There were reviews of existent research findings on media violence, as well as presentations of individual research projects. There were deep-psychological and philosophical lectures on our basic feelings and types of reactions, as well as sociological discourses on how society has changed, how media influences are tightly interwoven in a nexus of other influencing factors, and how film is not only art but largely an industry where players on the market seek more economic power. Furthermore, film analyses showed how media violence has changed over time in terms of ideology and technology, causes and consequences, fantasy and realism. It was pointed out that violent representations can also be defined in a broader sense, including representations of children. Children are often underrepresented in the media output, and falsely portrayed in, e.g., advertising.

The differences between individual media users were emphasised. Some children and adults seek experiences such as excitement, fascination, sensations, pleasure, and "wishful fear" from media violence. Others become shocked or blunted. For some, aggression may be reinforced or violent actions imitated. The role of heroes is essential in this context. The viewing context is also essential: with whom, where and with what aim viewing occurs.

Fear

Several speakers dealt with fear caused by features in films and programmes. Fear is sometimes necessary and positive, but fear that is not worked upon can linger, sometimes for many years. Quite a few also discussed the strong connection between fear and aggression – being aggressive is often a way to conceal fear.

Aggression or anger can be constructive but is many times destructive, addressed to the wrong person, expressed on the wrong occasion or expressed too strongly or too weakly. However, talking with children who are unhappy, angry and often unruly, about their and other persons' feelings, and about the reasons why people behave as they do in concrete situations, may be difficult. According to one speaker, a successful way of making children understand their and others' feelings can be to make a detour via films, film characters and the film characters' feelings. Many children prefer and find it easier to talk about anger on the screen – this is a language they understand – than to talk about their own feelings and how people react in real life.

Coping with Media Violence

Other methods of coping with media violence discussed at the seminar could best be summarised as a multifaceted approach: increased awareness among parents, media education for both teachers and children, production possibilities for children, responsibility and self-regulating systems on the part of the media – such as keeping to the watershed, classifications and ratings, showing signals on the screen, and, not least, promoting a diversity of quality programmes and films.

Most speeches at the seminar are written and available in Italian, and some are also in English and/or French. ■

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Violence on Portuguese Television

The first more extensive study on the representation of violence on Portuguese television was published in January 1999, and financed by the Alta Autoridade para a Comunicaçao Social (High Authority for the Media).[1]

Both intentional aggression and (unintentional) accidents were covered by the definition 'violence'. A representative sample of 438 programming hours in 1997 and on the four national terrestrial channels (RTP1, RTP2, SIC and TV1) was investigated. Entertainment programmes contained most violence – at least one violent act was found in 85 per cent of all entertainment programmes. The average number of violent acts in an entertainment programme was 14.4, which means that violence constituted 7 per cent of the whole entertainment programming time. The frequency of violent acts was particularly high in movies and cartoons, and the duration of violent time was relatively longer in children's entertainment programmes than in entertainment programming for adults. Violence was also often present in information programmes (occupying 6 per cent of the whole information programming time), whereas representation of violence in commercials was low.

The study also includes comparisons with content analyses using similar methods and carried out in other countries. The researchers found that

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physical violence and the percentage of so-called justified violent interactions are higher in Portugal than in the US.[2]

Notes

1. Jorge Vala, Luísa Lima and Rita Jerónimo (1999) *Avaliação da Violência na Televisão Portuguesa* [Evaluation of Violence on Portuguese Television], Lisbon, Alta Autoridade para a Comunicaçao Social.

2. Comparisons are made with the US *National Television Violence Study*.

Sources

http://www.aacs.pt/violencia_tv
and *Iris Legal Observations of the European Audiovisual Observatory*, May 1999, Vol. V, No. 5.

Survey of Violent Reports in Manipur

Dr. Debabrata Roy Laifungbam, MPH, Centre for Organisation Research and Education (CORE), Imphal, India, has conducted a survey of violence as reported in local media during the years of 1997 and 1998. The front pages of *The Imphal Free Press*, the largest English language daily, was chosen for an analysis of the representation of violence in the media in Manipur, in the north-east region of India. Over one fifth of all front-page reports were about violence throughout the period surveyed. The largest category was violence related to conflicts (state vs. armed opposition groups, ethnic rivalry, state vs. peoples, etc.), followed by human rights violations and, in 1998, there was also a rise in the amount of reports related to suicides and self-harm.

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Playing Video Games and Military Training

New Book on Media Violence

Grossman, Lt. Col. David; DeGaetano, Gloria: *Stop Teaching Our Kids to Kill: A Call to Action Against TV, Movie & Video Game Violence.* New York, Crown Publishers, 1999, 208 p., ISBN 0-609-60613-1.

In this book, the authors argue that what marks the difference between the current generation and earlier generations is the graphic media violence to which children of today are constantly exposed from a very early age. David Grossman is a retired officer and military psychologist who learned and studied how to enable people to kill in the military. According to him, there are great similarities between the methods used for teaching to kill in the army – methods that lead to aggression, fear and desensitisation – and what children learn from abuse and violence in the home and, most pervasively, from violence as entertainment on television, in the movies, and, not least, in interactive video games.

Roundtable Discussion on International Children's Media Research

On June 27, 1999, researchers from The Annenberg Public Policy Center (APPC) met with a group of six international children's media scholars on the eve of their Fourth Annual Children and Television Conference in Washington, D.C., USA. The goal of the meeting was to explore ways in which children's relationship with media is changing, the effectiveness of policies designed to minimize media's harmful effects and maximize television's educational potential, and the unanswered questions that should guide media researchers in the new millennium.

The researchers described how their countries – Canada, Israel, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, the UK, and the US – regulated children's media, the concerns of parents and policymakers, the funding of educational television, and the issues they are currently exploring in their own research. Members of the discussion described an increasing need to redefine "family" and "childhood" in the 21st century and an exploration of the key attributes of media content that appeal to children. Others suggested that an international roundtable of researchers convene on a regular basis to foster dialogue and encourage collaborative cross-cultural research.

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Media for Children

The Children and Broadcasting Foundation for Africa

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The Children and Broadcasting Foundation (CBF)[1] for Africa was formed in 1995 as a direct result of the First World Summit on Children and Television in Australia. The delegates from Africa were concerned that Africa's voice was not being heard at this international forum. We were also concerned that a charter on children's television had been produced at the Summit and that we were expected to endorse it without a mandate from our respective countries. Therefore, the Children's Television Charter was forwarded to the general meetings of the Southern African Broadcasting Association (SABA) and the Union of National Radio and Television Organizations in Africa (URTNA) for viewpoints.

Two African Summits

South Africa felt, however, that we had to create an environment in which children's broadcasting issues should be discussed within the region. Our emphasis was not only on television as was the case at the First World Summit but included radio, due to the greater availability of radio in Africa.

We proposed a Summit of Southern African countries, those belonging to the SADC region. It was held in South Africa in 1996 and the SADC Children's Broadcasting Charter was adopted. An All Africa Summit, as the next step of bringing Africa together to discuss the issues of children and broadcasting, took place in 1997 in Ghana. This Summit resulted in the Africa Charter on Children's Broadcasting.

Further Work for Children and Media

In March 1998, CBF participated in the Second World Summit on Television for Children in London. The African mandate was to ensure that children's participation and representation in the media was placed on the national agendas of African countries and in particular African broadcasters. The mandate was also to support African countries that were in the process of setting up national CBF chapters and to assist the Second World Summit in placing an emphasis on Africa's children's broadcasting needs.

At the Second World Summit we were able to ensure a special plenary session for Africa's voice and to co-ordinate the participation of influential African participants. Our disappointment was that radio did not take priority and our plenary session – like those of the other 'developing' world – was placed as a last agenda item each afternoon. This meant a low level of participation.

Due to our 'very vocal' conclusion to events in which we emphasised the role of the 'developing' world in children's broadcasting we were invited to a 'closed door' meeting. The meeting was attended by international stakeholders responsible for children's television, and was to discuss the Third World Summit in Greece, 2001. CBF became part of the international group participating and debating children's media.

In 1998, we were invited to observe the Prix Jeunesse Festival in Munich. The intention was to initiate a working relationship between CBF and Prix Jeunesse and to see how we could ensure an African participation and presence at the forthcoming Prix Jeunesse Festival in June 2000.

We agreed that the CBF and Prix Jeunesse would host a strategic workshop in Sun City, South Africa, inviting key stakeholders in children's broadcasting. We were fortunate that the SABA meeting in Mauritius took place in July 1998 and we were allowed to make a presentation on our intention to host an Africa-Prix Jeunesse workshop. It was held in March 1999. All nine African countries that participated will set up CBF chapters.

As a result of this workshop, CBF co-hosted the Forum on Children's Broadcasting in Windhoek, Namibia, August 1999. It consisted of a regional conference on children's broadcasting, an international co-production workshop and a national youth festival. Among other things, possibilities were explored of co-producing, e.g., information spots on HIV and AIDS, short items on arts and culture, and film letters between countries.

In November, concurrent to the Commonwealth Heads of State conference in Durban, South Africa, a Children's Summit will be held with the purpose of placing children's issues on the agenda of all Commonwealth countries. In preparation of the Summit, two Children and Media workshops take place in Johannesburg and Durban, respectively, in order to sensitise the media around children's issues.

This and much more work is going on in African countries to ensure children's participation and representation in the media. ■

Note

1. The CBF was formally registered in 1999. The board members include: Ursula von Zallinger (Prix Jeunesse International), Solomon Luvai (URTNA), Firdoze Bulbulia (Chairperson), Nadia Bulbulia (IBA), Zane Ibrahim (Bush Radio), Benji Francis (Africa Cultural Centre), Janet de Kretser (K-TV), Faith Isiakpere (Moments Entertainment), Virgina Witts (Namibian Broadcasting Corporation), and Shelley Barry (e.TV).

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URTNA Children's Programme Production Workshop, Nairobi, 1999

by
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When some of Africa's leading media programme producers met in April in Nairobi in a workshop organized by URTNA (Union of National Radio and Television Organizations of Africa), they had one thing in mind: to find ways of improving the continent's television programmes for children.

Sponsored by UNESCO, UNICEF-ESARO (Eastern and Southern African regional Office of UNICEF) and the Hoso Bunka Foundation of Japan, the workshop attracted participants from Kenya, South Africa, Ghana, Swaziland, Tanzania, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia, who, together with experts from across the globe, spent three weeks examining the problems that face them in programme production and how these problems could be tackled.

Lack of appreciation from governments and the business community of the importance of the media, particularly television, in the shaping of young minds was cited as a problem. Television, being the most effective medium of communication, can help governments promote responsible citizenry as well as expand markets for business.

In addition, cheap, irrelevant programmes from the West were recognized by the workshop as a factor that undermined children's television programming in Africa. The programmes were not only outdated but often violent and vulgar. They also promoted foreign cultural values that were, at the best, of little use to African children.

Co-operation

First it was agreed that lack of money should not deter producers from making low-budget but high-quality children's programmes. In fact, a 28-minute programme entitled *Ni Sisi* (Kiswahili for "It's Us") that was prepared jointly by the twelve producers during the workshop proved the possibility of producing such programmes. Using limited resources, the producers came up with an exemplary programme that combines oral narratives, Africa's rich wildlife and puppetry.

Above all, the producers recognized the fact that their aspirations can be achieved if they work closely together. Co-operation in programme production would entail continuous exchange of ideas, materials and programmes. It was therefore resolved that after the workshop, each producer was to come up with a high-quality programme every month that would be sent to URTNA's Programme Exchange Centre. The Centre would then exchange these programmes among the eleven producers as first priority, and later make them available to the rest of the Anglophone URTNA member organizations.

Sensitizing the Stakeholders

The fact that these thorny issues relating to children's television programming were common throughout the participating countries, posed a challenge to the producers. What should be their role in the improvement of things?

It was *Ni Sisi* that convinced the producers that it was possible to come up with quantitative and qualitative children's television programmes even if faced with a shaky budget.

The workshop participants saw the need of sensitizing African governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector on the importance of throwing their weight on the development of children's programmes. This goal would be achieved if these stakeholders were made to recognize the immediate and future benefits of investing in children's television programmes. Governments, for instance, should be made to know that it is cheaper to finance programmes that promote responsible citizenry among young people than spend much more money trying to fight crime among the same people later.■

Children's & Youth Radio Workshop at the Baltic Media Centre

by
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A week long production workshop for radio journalists held at the Baltic Media Centre on Bornholm, Denmark, in November 1998 aimed to make journalists aware of the way the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child impacts on their work in the field of children's and youth radio. The course attracted broadcasters from radio stations in Kaliningrad, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and St Petersburg and was conducted in both English and Russian.

The practice of involving children and young people in the strategies and simple technology of making radio is a feature of all new work developed in this field of radio over the past ten years. Youth broadcasters of the late 1980s are presenters, producers and journalists today, professionals who have grown up in the media with a social awareness of the rights and responsibilities that are

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part of good broadcasting journalism. Learning how the community works, what discrimination means, how to represent opposing views, and how the law is structured to uphold the rights of the individual, are all part of the learning package.

The advantages of enabling children and youth to participate in programme making for their local or national radio station can have an impact at all levels of the community: family, school and the wider parameters of youth culture in areas of leisure, fashion, health and employment. At the workshop, every moment that was not taken up by practical work was dedicated to looking at ways this outreach is achieved. Highpoints in what was, for many of those involved, a week of radical re-thinking, were the two days spent with guest-speaker producers from Radio Netherlands and Denmark Radio.

Inspiring Examples

Denmark Radio's live youth magazine show, first aired in 1995 as *Go Polaroid!*, now renamed *U.land* (Youth World), has its own website (**http://www.u.dr.dk**) as well as three hours live radio a week and a presence on two TV channels. Its tri-medial approach is based on the idea that "kids don't use one media at a time – they use all systems". *U.land* targets this multimedia lifestyle by featuring human interest stories on radio, using the web for surfing with emphasis on links and information, and using TV to provide documentaries and background stories. The policy is to focus on young people who have a goal to achieve (finding a place to live, kicking a drug habit, etc.), following through personal stories over a period of time. The producer, who was herself recruited from the unemployed, on-the-street youth culture of Copenhagen, explained how this process of bringing in young people interested in becoming involved in production, enables the series to maintain a direct connection with the audience it serves.

Producers from Baltic States radio stations were given examples from radio and TV that demonstrated how the two media are linked to showcase youth views and experiences on issues that affect their lives. The tri-medial approach effectively actions all aspects of articles 12, 13 and 17 of the Convention. Indirectly, the broadcasts and the way they are produced also action rights relating to education and the media; health; home and family life; privacy and protection against violence and discrimination. Furthermore, the experience of making programmes for radio and TV awakens the young to the responsibilities that are part of any involvement in human rights.

A weekly radio programme from Radio Netherlands, *Roughly Speaking*, broadcasts in English to a world-wide audience. This series also has its own web site (**http://www.rnw.nl**) and focuses on issues that impact the lives of the younger generation. Its global outreach enables the show to feature the voices of youth listeners from a wide range of different cultures. Topics raised and debated on the show reflect international concerns (such as football hooligans, safe sex, equal opportunities, etc.). The series is produced by a young team and the agenda is determined by the interests and concerns of their listeners.

The week was the second such course at BMC. An earlier children's and youth production workshop resulted in the setting up of new programming for children in the Baltics, Latvia Radio leading the way with *Spica Tres Dienas*, produced by a team of newly recruited 10-14 year olds. Latvia Radio and other stations are now planning new ways to put the voices of youth on the air.■

AGORA '99 – Planning for the 3rd World Summit

AGORA, arranged by the European Children's Television Centre (E.C.T.C.), is an international forum where professionals in the area of media for children, experts on media literacy, researchers, politicians, child rights organisations and others gather and network once a year. Children, too, are invited and have, among other things, the possibility of participating in the "Kids for Kids Festival" with video films they have produced themselves.

An essential part of the fifth AGORA in Thessaloniki, Greece, June 1999, was devoted to planning the 3rd World Summit on Media for Children in 2001 – an event that also will be hosted in Thessaloniki by E.C.T.C. More than fifty persons from all over the world were invited to the Advisory Committee for the Summit. Some advice that was put forward was:

- The summit must be very political – decision makers must be engaged.
- The summit must be truly universal with global representation during the planning process, on the panels, and among participants.
- The fact that most media are an entertainment industry should not be forgotten in the struggle for balance between children's rights issues, a top priority, and media issues.

In this context, UNICEF representative William Hetzer presented the findings of a survey of broadcasters and producers of children's programmes in 63 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America (i.e., a response rate of 54%; questionnaires were sent to 117 countries). An important finding was that among a list of given topics, the following were ranked highest as priorities for the 3rd World Summit: 'more examples of how to involve children in creation of programmes'; 'information on children's needs and how these are changing'; 'information on co-production possibilities'; and 'new ideas for children's programming'. These countries gave low ranks to topics such as 'information on new technological developments', 'on

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sources of finance', 'on marketing children's programmes' and 'on chance to buy children's programmes'.

An on-line service – **www.childrens-media.org** – is functioning as an open forum for everybody who wants to take part in the planning process.

Furthermore, a World Summit Foundation was initiated by the Australian Children's Television Foundation, which organised the First World Summit on Television for Children in Melbourne, 1995. The purpose of the Foundation is to decide where future world summits on media for children will be held and to assist in their planning, but not to seek income or administer funds. The managing committee of the Foundation consists of people who have chaired international or regional summits in the past or will do so in the future.

by Cecilia von Feilitzen
Scientific Co-ordinator, ICCVOS

Final Report from the Second World Summit

A comprehensive and detailed report from the Second World Summit on Television for Children in London, 1998, has been published with support of the Annenberg Public Policy Center, USA.

The report offers outlines from each day's sessions, regional forums, master classes, screenings and children's events. It presents the essence of the Summit and a good general view of the outcomes and the opinions of over 180 speakers, representing 50 different countries.

The report is available on the web site of the Summit, **http://www.childrens-summit.org**

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Media Education and Children's Participation

Educating for the Media and the Digital Age

by
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The General Conference of UNESCO in 1997 approved that, for its programme in 1998-1999, support for media education and the creation of media space for young people should be ensured through different modalities and actions. These actions are based on a number of events and documents undertaken by UNESCO and its Member States since the end of the 1960's, not least the "Grünwald Declaration on Media Education" (1982) and the Toulouse Colloquy "New Directions in Media Education" (1990).

In light of this, the Austrian National Commission for UNESCO and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs in co-operation with UNESCO organised an international conference, "Educating for the Media and the Digital Age", in Vienna, Austria, 18-20 April 1999.

Susanne Krucsay, at the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, prepared the conference along the following lines: One of the goals of the meeting is to concisely outline the need for media education (Why?), present good practices in terms of contents and methods (How?), as well as offer perspectives for a critical use of *all* media both in the present and in the future (Strategies?). Besides trying to organise a fruitful exchange between media educators (teachers, teacher trainers, researchers, media practitioners, etc.), the target audience of the presentations are educational experts from the ministries in 21 countries representing the five main regions of the world. The presentations should initiate and promote ideas concerning how to implement media education in countries characterised by great diversity.

Forty-one invited representatives from 33 countries attended the conference and gave speeches that are now being edited into a final report. Also, before the conference, each country provided, using a standardised form, a short description of its own school situation in terms of media education, descriptions that had been compiled into a special report.[1] However, the aim of the conference was not only to review, redesign and reinforce systems for media education for teacher training and primary and secondary school learning, but also for out-of-school youth and adults, i.e., tertiary, non-formal and lifelong education.

Three working groups were formed to draw up policy statements and suggestions from the

Notes

1. "Educating for the Media and the Digital Age, April 18-20, 1999, Vienna: Country Reports", Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, UNESCO, Austrian Commission for UNESCO, 1999.

2. "Recommendations Addressed to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation UNESCO. Adopted by the Vienna Conference 'Educating for the Media and the Digital Age' 18-20 April 1999."

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speeches as inspiration for a renewal of media education activities in UNESCO's Member States. The result was "Recommendations Addressed to UNESCO",[2] which were approved unanimously by the participants and which were to be put forward to UNESCO's General Assembly this autumn.

The conference was covered using video, newspaper articles and radio interviews by primary and secondary students from two Austrian schools – a concrete example of how young people can learn and handle media. ■

Media Pedagogy Not Just Media Violence

by
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When children, adolescents and media are debated, the "media" are mostly treated as synonymous with visual, moving pictures. This is probably a result of many years' focusing on questions of media violence – a connection that can perhaps be explained, but that is unfortunate since it has a negative connotation. Adults should shoulder their responsibility and be aware of the exploitation of children and adolescents. However, several methods and media are available to increase youngsters' insight into media culture. We must particularly adopt a positive attitude towards youngsters' media interest.

Newspaper in Education (NiE), an activity run by newspaper publishers within WAN (World Association of Newspapers), currently exists in over 30 countries. Even if it naturally varies from country to country, there are common aspirations that should have a clearer place in media pedagogy.

From Curiosity to Knowledge

Children and adolescents are eager to learn. The daily newspaper can respond to their natural inquisitiveness about their immediate surroundings and the rest of the world. By exploiting this curiosity questions of news content and form can become an interesting part of education covering everything from trivia to serious problems.

The written word and still pictures give the students a chance to stop, turn back and scrutinise. Regular reading of the newspaper and discussing it in class gradually increase their awareness of how the daily paper builds up its information in order to attract the reader's interest. Newspaper reading also allows individual tempo, time to reflect and, in due course, the ability to form one's own relatively well-grounded understanding and to find ways of expressing one's own opinion.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The fact that the daily paper is an excellent aid not only to following events around the world, but also to becoming aware of the form and expression of mass communication, does not necessarily mean that it always lives up to its high standards. According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children are entitled to information, to make their voices heard and to be taken seriously. What this entails for newspapers was the theme of NiE's international conference "Give a Voice to the Children" in Stockholm, 1995.

The Norwegian-Swedish investigation "Young People and the Press" (1994, 1996, 1998) points at another problem – the possibility for young people to identify with the picture that the press presents of them. Are children and adolescents victims, perpetrators, decorations or individuals with their own thoughts and abilities? Does one have to be a winner or a loser in order to arouse the attention of the media, or can everyday reflections also be of interest to the reader?

The Daily Newspaper – a Pre-requisite

A major problem in many parts of the world is the increasing segregation that results from large groups of children and youngsters growing up in areas where the tradition of a daily newspaper is weak. Counteracting linguistic segregation constitutes the greatest challenge for both NiE and newspapers around the globe. It is not inconsequential that the title of this year's international NiE conference in Paris in September was "Reading for Life". There, both optimistic and pessimistic views of the newspaper's future were put forward. The World Young Reader Prize 1999 was given to *The Sunday Times of South Africa* for its supplement *Read Right*, which contains lots of material for children and young people and aims to strengthen democracy and tolerance through an increased interest in reading.

According to last year's statistics (the *Media Barometer*[1]), newspaper reading seems to have increased amongst youngsters in Sweden. This is inspiring, but should not allow us to sit back. New generations must be given the chance to discover the pleasure and usefulness of reading newspapers and, thus, to increase their ability to take a critical view of phenomena such as media violence. ■

Note

1. Nordicom-Sveriges Mediebarometer 1998, *MedieNotiser*, No. 1, 1999, Göteborgs universitet, Nordicom, Sweden, ISSN 1101-4539

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Canadian Book on Media Education and Culture

Pungente, SJ, John J; O'Malley, Martin: *More Than Meets the Eye. Watching Television Watching Us*. McClelland & Stewart Inc., The Canadian Publishers, Ontario, 1999, 254 p., ISBN 0-7710-7100-0

"We live in a mediated society. Our culture and our business are formed by the mass media. Whether we think this is a good thing or a bad thing matters not; what does matter is that we develop an informed and critical understanding of the nature of the media, their impact, and the techniques they use", John J. Pungente and Martin O'Malley write in their new book on media culture and media education.

Argentine Summary of Students' Media Production

Producción de Medios en la Escuela. Reflexiones desde la práctica (Media Production in School. Reflections on Practise). Coordinación de Periodismo, Comunicación y Educación Capital Federal, Secretaría de Educación, Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires. Editado con fondos del Programa de Participación de la UNESCO, 1998, 124 p., ISBN 987-97375-0-4

This book describes an Argentine project, in progress for more than ten years, in which children of Buenos Aires have had the opportunity to take part in media production in class. The project, supported by the local Board of Education and UNESCO, among others, has been conducted as a joint enterprise between professionals of the fields of journalism, communication and education.

Under the leadership of Silvia Bacher, more than 200 schools – half of them situated in financially poor areas – have taken part in the project, thus enabling 47,000 children to practise the art of making videos, newspapers, wall papers, and radio programmes. Working in pairs or groups, the children have been responsible for the finding and evaluation of information, as well as for the presentation of the final product.

The primary aim of the project might be stated as a wish to promote the capacity for independent thinking and inquiry in the children, especially with respect to the system of social values promoted in commercial media. Another driving force has been the need to familiarize the children with different kinds of media. The project has proved a success for the teachers involved as well. One teacher said: "I have learnt not to think of myself as the only bearer of truth, because the teacher brings what she knows and the pupils as well... the workshop gives you the opportunity to change roles..."

US Book on Media Education and Educational Technology

Tyner, Kathleen: *Literacy in a Digital World. Teaching and Learning in the Age of Information*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., New Jersey, 1998, 296 p., ISBN 0-8058-2226-7

In this book, author Kathleen Tyner examines the tenets of literacy through a historical lens to demonstrate how new communication technologies are resisted and accepted over time. She explores the juncture between two broad movements that aim at improving education: educational technology and media education.

Literacy in a Digital World contains concrete examples of media teaching, interviews with practitioners, cutting-edge uses of technology in education, and practical solutions to the challenges of new media and its uses in a culturally diverse society.

The First Japanese Book Ever on Media Literacy

Suzuki, Midori (ed.): *Learning Media Literacy* (in Japanese). Kyoto, Sekai Shiso Sa., 1997, 305 p., ISBN 4-7907-0653-2

This publication consists of some fifteen chapters divided into three parts: Theory, Practice, and Action. The theoretical part deals with ways of defining and theorising about media literacy, which is a broader concept than media education in that it includes all citizens' media awareness and right to communicate. This part also contains a chapter by Len Masterman about the Internet. The second part presents media research analyses on, e.g., journalism, how the media treated the Quobe earthquake in Japan, as well as gender constructions in television commercials. The third, action-oriented part contains case studies, such as the philosophy behind public access television in the US, community radio in the world, the UN action plan based on the women's world conference in Beijing, and the Canadian discussion on the V-chip and television ratings.

The book, which is intended for university students, media professionals, and citizens – not least women, parents and teachers – became a success and has already been reprinted twice. The publishing house now wants a second book on the theme, which will be edited by Midori Suzuki and Toshiko Tomiyaz, both university lecturers and active in the Forum for Citizens' Television & Media, Japan.

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Source
Interview with Midori Suzuki and Toshiko Tomiaz, November 1998.

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Connect Reports on Australian Students' Participation

Connect, which started in 1979, is a newsletter for teachers, students, parents, consultants, administrators and others who are active and interested in supporting student participation in governance and curriculum issues in primary and secondary schools throughout Australia. Every two months, the newsletter informs about such participation projects – not least projects in which children and young people themselves are producing media, lists and reviews resources that are available, and encourages network practices between classes, schools and the community.

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Regulation and Self-regulation

Regulation of Violence and Sex in Syrian Media – Some Reflections

by
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Just like in many of the world states, violence and sex in the media are considered the greatest obsession of educationalists and parents in Syria. Children and adolescents spend considerable time watching TV, and it is impossible to continuously control what a child is watching. Nevertheless, there are certain factors that distinguish media in Syria and the other Arab states from media in many of the world states.

Television

Television in Syria is possessed by the government and is under the control of the Ministry of Information. This means that the government, which bans programmes of sex and violence, strictly censors television. Moreover, the social and religious traditions in Syria admonish telecasting of programmes that contain sexual scenes, but are indulgent towards violence. Government censorship, however, prevents scenes that are full of blood, killing and drug addiction.

There are three TV channels in Syria: STV1, STV2 and the Syrian Satellite Channel. The first channel telecasts in particular the Arabic programmes, especially the locally produced ones, while the second channel telecasts foreign programmes and films. The government strictly censors all of these programmes, whether local or foreign.

Sometimes, the foreign detective films that are telecasted on STV2 begin with scenes of killing that are followed by a detective investigation. The censors, in my opinion, allow such scenes when they contain a minimum of violence. However, social films are most common on this channel and it is generally void of harmful scenes.

STV1 is the most popular channel in Syria, and is also watched by most of the children. The main issue is that children's programmes are telecasted so early that children remain in front of the TV and watch adult serials and programmes, as well. The censorship panel censors the local TV serials, which are greatly favoured, while they are still on paper; then it watches them after shooting but before telecasting. As a home dramatist, I am experienced in dealing with censorship panels, and can state that scenes of sex and perversion are non-existent in our TV serials. Thus, Syrian writers avoid such scenes, and, producers exaggerate their compliance in that they refuse to shoot even innocent kisses between a mother and a son. This situation creates a new problem, namely, generalised rudeness between serial characters. It is easy to find a slap in a serial episode, but an innocent kiss or flirt between a husband and a wife is completely absent. Naturally, this has an impact on the behaviour of the viewers, especially the children who, as mentioned, watch most of the evening serials that are primarily directed towards their parents.

Cinema

The cinema, however, is a different matter. In Syria, movies are also subjected to governmental censorship. Moreover, the importer of movies is a governmental entity that is also responsible for production and distribution of local movies. Thus, in order to finance local production, it imports and distributes films of violence and action. Adolescents frequent the cinema and are the primary audience of such base films. The contradiction in the function of this governmental cinematic agency is obvious. It is the only producer of local movies that are considered, artistically and ideologically, to be on a high level. At the same time, it imports and distributes base foreign films. Besides, the movie-theatres in Syrian towns have

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been neglected and have declined to such an extent that family attendance has gone down.

International Satellite Channels and Internet

Although the government censors Syrian television, the TV situation has changed after the spread of satellite receiver sets that can pick up various international satellite television channels. These sets have experienced rapid distribution during the last five years. The roofs have become full of dishes that enable their owners to watch different satellite channels away from governmental censorship. It is well known that many of these channels telecast films of violence, crime and sex. Some of them have even specialised in telecasting advertisements for girls who practise telephone sex, addressing viewers in all languages including Arabic.

Children and adolescents left alone in the house can easily watch these channels. I have heard many families complain that their children select these channels by themselves so as to watch these programmes. The government has recently tapped the phone numbers announced on these channels, warning the parents and the callers in order to deter them, but the channels continuously change the phone numbers. Besides, we have heard many families' complaints about costly phone bills.

As regards sex sites on the Internet, we have no problem because the Internet is made inaccessible by the government. The great problem we face is the sex satellite channels and those that telecast violent films. The question requires making strict international laws that limit such channels.■

Views on Regulation of TV Violence in Egypt

by
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Like most Arab and developing countries, we still depend on censorship and codes of ethics to regulate TV violence in Egypt. The question, however, is whether this regulation is sufficient.

Research Findings

A recent study (El-Simary & El-Kellini, 1997) showed that 95 per cent of cartoons on the Egyptian screen are full of violence and that 75 per cent of these films are imported from the United States.

Other Egyptian studies indicate that there is a causal relation between TV violence and aggressiveness among young people. In his study on a sample of 150 children aged 10-12, El-Jamil (1988) found that heavy viewing of TV violence contributed to children's aggression. Kamhawi (1994) supported this finding when she studied the impact of TV violence on aggressiveness among adolescents.

TV violence can also affect children psychologically. El-Simary and El-Kellini (1997) concluded that young children aged 6-9 who watch TV containing violent programmes for more that five hours daily suffer from fear, anxiety and nightmares. Interviews with young children revealed that they like action and exciting experiences when watching television, but that it doesn't always have to be violent.

Some recent studies sought to analyse how TV violence affects children's imitation. Rada (1994) found that foreign cartoon films are responsible for spreading aggressive imitation among Egyptian children, and that boys are more often affected by TV violence than girls. According to the study by El-Simary and El-Kellini (1997), children, especially boys, tend to imitate violent TV scenes with their friends and colleagues in schools and social clubs. Moreover, the findings of Grais' (1990) experimental study did not coincide with what has been documented by other researchers. She found that rewarding or punishing aggressive behaviour in films does not have any effect in the sense of 'controlling' (increasing and diminishing) viewing children's imitation of TV violence.

It could also be of interest to mention that one famous Egyptian daily newspaper, *El-Ahram*, presented support for the thesis that violent films helped to spread terrorism in the country. Another Egyptian newspaper, the weekly *Akhar El Yom*, launched a four-week campaign against TV violence, aiming at spreading awareness among the public concerning TV's harmful influences on children and adolescents, and calling for more effective regulations to control media violence.

The Egyptian Society

I would like to propose a number of regulations that, from my point of view, could be effective in combating TV violence. First, however, two main characteristics shaping Egyptian society must be taken into consideration.

One is that 49 per cent of the population is illiterate. Thus, not all kinds of regulations applied in American and European societies can be effective for different social groups in Egypt, for example, the TV programme rating system.

The other characteristic is that the social and economical circumstances in Egypt differ from many other countries, and imply that, e.g., we cannot rely on parents to guide their children's TV viewing. Most middle class parents work for not less than twelve hours a day, and often they have more than one job in order to make ends meet. In Egypt there are also different forms of TV viewing. In addition to home viewing, there is what we call public viewing in cafés, libraries and social clubs.

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Suggestions for Regulations

Considering these characteristics of the country, regulations should, in my opinion, develop in two parallel directions: 1. Spreading awareness among the public concerning the harmful consequences of TV violence on children's and adolescents' behaviour. 2. Showing other kinds of violent portrayals in drama and news.

1. Spreading awareness among the public

We should not only spread awareness concerning the harmful influences of TV violence among viewers, but also among TV writers, producers, directors, and editors. I recommend the following:

- Awareness should begin in schools by helping children to evaluate TV plays on a scientific basis, concentrating on the difference between drama and reality. Awareness should also include the disadvantages of watching too much TV violence.
- Students in schools and universities should be encouraged to form groups, aiming at combating TV violence and spreading awareness of its harmful influences through symposia, round table discussions, and TV shows. This could form a basis for increasing the role of these groups, allowing them to work as pressure groups in Egyptian society.
- A media campaign should be launched with the aim of spreading awareness concerning the harmful influences of TV violence among persons in different economic, social and cultural groups.
- A programme rating system would be suitable and help educated parents to guide their children when watching TV. The rating system could be published in the daily newspapers or take the form of signs or signals shown on the TV screen whenever a violent film is broadcast.
- Educational films and programmes should be produced and shown before or after violent films. These films should concentrate on the disadvantages of TV violence and the difference between real and drama violence.
- Training courses are important for news editors, film producers, writers, and directors to make them aware of how to deal with and portray TV violence without contributing to harmful influences on the audience.

2. Showing other kinds of violent portrayals

These different images could include the following:

- Close and medium shots of quarrels, killing and gunfire scenes should be avoided.
- TV plays should include some morals and values, such as "Work is a way to success", "Crime does not pay".
- Criminals should be portrayed in ways that make people dissociate themselves from them and avoid imitating them.
- Criminals in TV plays should be seriously punished, even in comedies. Open and indefinite endings of violent films should be avoided. ■

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Ratings of TV Programmes in Slovakia

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On October 1, 1999, the Slovakian national public service television STV started classifying and rating programmes in order to ensure that those shown between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. (the watershed) are suitable for family viewing. The classification system, inspired by the French, US and Polish models, comprises five categories that take the viewers' age, and the degree of violence and pornography into account.

Regulation and self-regulation as part of a new Act on Broadcasting was also discussed by the Slovakian parliament in October 1999.

These measures were preceded by a seminar in June of last year, organised by the Council of the

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Slovak Republic for Radio and TV Broadcasting in co-operation with STV. The aim was to bring together broadcasters, regulators, parents, teachers and other representatives of the public to discuss, from different points of view, the possibilities of reducing gratuitous violence and other potential harmful contents on television.

At the seminar, the findings of two inquiries were presented as well. In the first investigation, some 40 volunteers had been asked by the Council to watch and then classify – according to the French sign system – seven episodes of different long-running series broadcast 6 a.m. - 10 p.m. on four TV channels in Slovakia. Not one episode was classified as suitable for general viewing. Two episodes from Australia and Italy were considered unsuitable for children under 7 years of age, four episodes from the US unsuitable for children under 12, and one episode from the debated US series *X Files* unsuitable for children under 15. All volunteers meant that television programmes should be labelled according to age suitability. 85 per cent agreed with the statement that screen violence could negatively influence emotional well-being, behaviour and partially the psychological, moral and physical development of children.

The second investigation was carried out by a research institute (MKV) with a statistically balanced sample of 1,200 persons who were asked the same questions as the volunteers. 83 per cent of the sample agreed with the above-mentioned statement on negative influences of screen violence. 64 per cent meant that television programmes should be labelled according to age suitability. Only 2 per cent thought that such a policy constitutes censorship.■

Information for US Parents on V-chip and Ratings

An education project to inform parents in the United States how to use the V-chip and TV ratings was launched in July 1999 by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) and the Center for Media Education (CME).

According to a recent national survey by the KFF, 77 percent of parents say they would use a V-chip if they had one, but most do not understand the basics about what the TV ratings mean or how the V-chip works.

"Many parents are deeply concerned about the impact of TV on their kids", means Vicky Rideout, director of KFF's Program on the Entertainment Media & Public Health, "but right now they don't understand what the rating mean or how the V-chip works. This project is designed to give parents the information they need to use these new tools if they choose to."

A free guide and a web site – **http://www.vchipeducation.org** – are among the tools the project is offering the public. The guide includes an explanation of the TV ratings system, directions on using the V-chip, tips on monitoring children's TV viewing, and a form for submitting comments about the ratings to the TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board.

V-chip technology was mandated by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which requires that half of all televisions larger than 13" sold in the United States should be equipped with V-chips by July 1, 1999, the remaining half by January 1, 2000.

Source
Kaiser Family Foundation
http://www.kff.org/content/archive/1491/pressrelease.html

US Bill Urges Uniform Media Labelling System

A new US "21st Century Media Responsibility Act" was introduced by Senators McCain and Liberman in June 1999.

"Parents are confused by the myriad of different ratings. One way to help parents is to provide consistent and clear information about what their children are purchasing", said Senator McCain.[1]

The act gives the entertainment media industries six months to work together to establish a universal labelling system for interactive video games, video programs, motion pictures, and music. These labels must reflect the nature, context, intensity of violent content, and age appropriateness of the media product. The bill now awaits action by the House of Representatives.

The Bill was followed by an "Appeal to Hollywood" posted on the world wide web, in which the entertainment industry is urged to set higher standards of responsibility and "to band together to develop a new voluntary code of conduct". The statement was launched in July by a coalition of well-known Americans and is now signed by several thousand people.[2]

Free-speech advocate groups have criticized the Media Responsibility Act, as well as the appeal, and answered with an "Appeal to Reason", declaring that "while there is certainly much to criticize in the media, this appeal is likely to do more harm than good. By promoting the idea that violent imagery causes crime and should be suppressed, it encourages government censorship."[3]

Sources
1. Web site: http://www.senate.gov
2. Web site: http://www.media-appeal.org
3. Web site: http://www.freeexpression.org

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European Commission Follows Up Study on Parental Control

In July, the European Commission published a report outlining the conclusions it has drawn from the Oxford University study on parental control of television broadcasting[1] and the follow-up measures it intends to take.

The Oxford group found that the adoption of the "V-chip"-technology used in the United States and Canada is not technically feasible in Europe, but that digital technology offers the chance to develop other, more reliable and sophisticated filtering systems.

The Commission will discuss these findings with the Digital Video Broadcasting Group (DVB), a global consortium with a membership of over 220 broadcasters, manufacturers, network operators and regulatory bodies in more than thirty countries. The discussions will focus on the technical and commercial feasibility of implementing such systems.

Furthermore, the Commission will promote the development of descriptive rating systems adapted to the European environment through contacts with relevant bodies, such as boards of film classification, broadcasters, Internet operators, the video industry and viewers. In this context, the Commission will also discuss to what extent and in what ways educational and awareness measures should be undertaken with regard to television viewing in the future.

In addition, the Oxford study constitutes "an important input" to the evaluation of the implementation of the EU Television Without Frontiers directive, which must be completed by 31 December 2000, declares the Commission.

by Anna Celsing, Free-lance Journalist, Belgium

Note

1. The report of the Oxford study, performed by the Programme in Comparative Media Law and Policy (PCMLP), Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, Oxford University, is available on the web site: http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg10/avpolicy/key_doc/parental_control/index.html

New EU Commissioners on the Protection of Minors

Before being sworn in, the new European Commissioners answered written questions put to them by Members of the European Parliament. Some of these concerned the protection of minors as regards television and the Internet.

"We do not necessarily have to choose between self-regulation and state regulation. We should rather try to find the most efficient combination of the two. Given the nature of the Internet, some self-regulation is called for. However, this must be supported by legislative measures at the appropriate level", wrote Ms Viviane Reding, Commissioner for Education and Culture.

Ms Reding also recommended the use of filtering devices and software directing children to safe websites, as well as the establishment of "hotlines" for handling complaints about illegal content, etc.

The new Commissioner for Enterprise and Information Society, Mr Erkki Liikanen, seems to share some of these thoughts.

"Not all aspects of the protection of minors can be dealt with by self-regulation. The Commission must ensure that there is cooperation between police forces and judges in the fight against crime on the Internet, including child pornography."

Mr Liikanen also mentioned the proposal for an EU Directive on certain legal aspects of electronic commerce, which will include topics such as the liability of intermediaries. A Council agreement on this proposal is expected at the end of this year, at the earliest.

by Anna Celsing, Free-lance Journalist, Belgium

Internet Content Rating for Europe (INCORE)

All over Europe there has been an increased concern over potentially harmful content on the Internet. Ways of protecting children and young people from material such as child pornography, violence and racism are being discussed and developed.

INCORE was set up by a group of European organisations with a common interest in industry self-regulation and rating of Internet content. The work is carried out in collaboration with the European Commission, and is implementing many of the activities announced in EU's *Action Plan on Promoting Safer Use of the Internet*. The Action Plan is part of a coherent set of policies at EU level that deal with illegal and harmful content on the Internet.

By means of the experience of partners and sponsors and through a process of discussions and consultation with Internet users and content providers, INCORE is working to develop an Internet content rating and filtering system which is adapted for European languages and cultures. It also works to promote initiatives of self-regulation.

Source

Web site: http://www.incore.org
INCORE, Belgium
Fax: +32 2 503 42 05
E-mail: info@incore.org

Internet Content Rating Association (ICRA)

Formed in May 1999, ICRA was created as an independent, non-profit international organisation, based in the US, with a mission to develop an internationally acceptable online content rating system.

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ICRA was formed with the backing of some of the world's well-known Internet and communications companies. A number of initiatives have begun, including collaboration with INCORE and the Bertelsmann Foundation.

The new global rating system will be based on the established RSAC*i* rating mechanism that is already embedded in Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator. The RSAC*i* is based on voluntary rating by content providers and voluntary use of the filters by consumers. The purpose of the rating system is to protect free speech and avoid governmental intervention, while children can be protected according to the standards that their parents choose for them. The system provides the consumers with information about the level of nudity, sex, language, and violence in web sites. To date, more than 120,000 web sites have been rated with the RSAC*i* system.

Source

Web site: http://www.icra.org
Internet Content Rating Association
E-mail: info@icra.org

Web Sites on Internet Safety

INCORE, **http://www.incore.org**, and I*M Europe/Internet Action Plan, **http://www.echo.lu/iap/index.html#register**, are both comprehensive and useful web sites with information on Internet content related issues. They include policy and legal measures, descriptions of rating and filtering systems, hotlines and on-line resources, links to relevant international government agencies and organisations, and sites for children.

On the web site of INCORE, Internet users and content providers can find out what a European rating and filtering system may look like through links to existing North American systems such as RSAC*i* and SafeSurf. Internet users are also given the opportunity to submit views and opinions in an online questionnaire, translated into all the official European languages. **http://www.incore.org/paper/paper.htm**

There are a large variety of Internet safety tools on the market – filtering and rating systems, monitoring, children's browsers, etc. The US-based GetNetWise, **http://www.getnetwise.org**, is a resource where families and caregivers can find ways to help children have safe, educational, and entertaining on-line experiences. This web site includes a glossary of Internet terms, an on-line safety guide and a directory of safety tools, directions for how to identify and report illegal materials, and links to web sites for children, teens, and families. GetNetWise is organised by a coalition of Internet industry corporations and international and US public interest organisations.

The Children's Partnership Online in the US has published *The Parents' Guide to the Information Superhighway*. This 36-page guide is free of charge and available in English and Spanish on **http://www.childrenspartnership.org**

An *Australian Families Guide to the Internet* is available on the Australian Broadcasting Authority web site **http://www.aba.gov.au/family/index.html**

Self-regulation Discussed in the European Union

As a result of technology convergence and the spread of the Internet, regulation of media content is becoming an increasingly difficult task. At the same time, certain public interests, such as the protection of minors, must be safeguarded. Therefore, the role of voluntary self-regulation has been discussed by the European Union on several occasions lately.

In April, the issue was deliberated at an experts' seminar in Saarbrücken organised by the German EU Council Presidency and the EU Commission. "Self-regulation systems are relevant to protecting important public interests...However, self-regulation cannot replace state regulation entirely..." was one of the conclusions of the seminar.

Within certain limits, increased international co-operation would be beneficial, said the experts: "...it makes sense for the description and assessment of content to be co-ordinated. However, care must be taken to ensure that regional differences regarding the legality and social acceptability of different types of content can be preserved".

EU Ministers for Culture seem rather sceptical of the idea of self-regulation. At a Council meeting in June, they noted that self-regulation could usefully "complement" regulation in the future, but stressed the need to further analyze the issue, balance the strengths and weaknesses of self-regulation systems and take into account the interests of third parties, notably users, when considering the matter. They also emphasized that "it is up to each Member State to determine the possible complementary role of self-regulation to legislation".

The media industry, for its part, seems keen on self-regulation. What is needed is "a new culture of responsibility", said Mark Wössner, Chairman of the Bertelsmann Foundation at an "Internet Content Summit", organised in Munich in September by the Foundation in co-operation with INCORE (Internet Content Rating for Europe).

At the meeting, Mr. Wössner called for user implementation of rating and filtering mechanisms combined with the creation of international hotlines and "credible self-regulatory institutions" to resolve user complaints. "It is in the best interest of industry to commit to self-regulatory mechanisms. They reduce the likelihood of overreach and rather inflexible government regulation", he added.

by Anna Celsing, Free-lance Journalist, Belgium

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The Internet Content Summit

The "Internet Content Summit" in Munich, Germany, in September 1999,[1] was the first milestone in the implementation of an international self-regulatory system to deal with the protection of minors online. The conference was organized and funded by the Bertelsmann Foundation in co-operation with INCORE, and supported by the Bavarian State Chancellery and the Bavarian Ministry of the Interior. The Summit brought together over 300 decision-makers and key experts from politics, internet industry, media and the user community.

After one year of intensive work within an expert network, the Bertelsmann Foundation presented the "Memorandum on Self-Regulation of Internet Content". The Memorandum contains practical recommendations for governments, industry, and users to work together in developing a new culture of responsibility on the Internet. These recommendations are based on reports by experts from four universities around the world, and on the Internet User Survey that was carried out in Australia, Germany and the United States by the Bertelsmann Foundation in co-operation with the Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) during June 1999.[2] The survey was conducted among the general population over 18 years of age.

The Internet User Survey shows that a large majority in all three countries thinks it would be good if undesirable messages on Internet could be filtered out automatically. At the same time, a large majority of the German and American Internet users interviewed feel it is important that they are able to set the filters themselves. In all of the countries studied, racist messages, pornography and sex scenes, as well as obscene language, are most frequently cited as types of content that should be blocked.

Source

1. The Bertelsmann Foundation, web site: http://www.stiftung.bertelsmann.de/internetcontent/english/frameset_home.htm
2. The Internet User Survey, web site: http://www.stiftung.bertelsmann.de/internetcontent/english/content/c2360.htm

Note

The results of the Summit will be published in Waltermann, Jens; Machill, Marcel (eds.): *Protecting Our Children on the Internet. Towards a New Culture of Responsibility*. Gütersloh, Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers, 1999, aprox. 250 p. ISBN 3-89204-474-0 (expected to be released in January 2000).

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New Australian Internet Law

A new law seeking Internet regulation in Australia has caused strong reactions from the Internet industry and other groups. The "Broadcasting Services Amendment (Online Services) Act 1999"[1] was passed by the Australian House of Representatives on June 30, 1999, after being passed by the Senate on May 26, with minor amendments.

The law requires Australian Internet service providers (ISPs) to remove offensive or illegal material off their sites and to block access to similar sites outside the country. ISPs that fail to follow directions from the Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) could face fines of up to $27,500 per day.[2]

Findings of the Internet User Survey[3] show that Australians support the idea of content labelling and reporting hotlines and would block certain types of Internet content if they were able to do so. The "results seem to indicate support for a co-regulatory approach to Internet content regulation. It is this kind of regulatory scheme that has been passed by Parliament and is being introduced by the ABA in partnership with the (Internet) industry and the community", said Mr Gareth Grainger, ABA Deputy Chairman.[4]

The ABA will operate a complaints hotline from January 1, 2000.

Sources

1. The Broadcasting Services Amendment, web site: http://www.aph.gov.au/parlinfo/billsnet/990727.pdf
2. ZDNet Australia, http://www.zdnet.com.au/zdnn/stories/zdnn_display/au0000349.html
3. The Internet User Survey was carried out in Australia, Germany and the United States by the Bertelsmann Foundation in co-operation with the ABA during June 1999, web site: http://www.stiftung.bertelsmann.de/internetcontent/english/content/c2360.htm
4. ABA News release, 71/1999, http://www.aba.gov.au//about/public_relations/newrel_99/71nr99.htm

New Rule Protects Children's Online Privacy

The Federal Trade Commission (FCT), USA, has issued a final rule to implement the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA). The main goal of COPPA and the rule is to protect the privacy of children using the Internet. As of April 21, 2000, US commercial web sites and on-line services directed to children, or that knowingly collect information from children, will be required to inform parents of their information practices, and must obtain parental consent before collecting, using, or disclosing personal information from children under 13.

"The rule meets the mandates of the statute. It puts parents in control over the information collected from their children online, and is flexible enough to accommodate the many business

practices and technological changes occurring on the Internet", said FTC Chairman Robert Pitofsky.

The full text of the rule as well as information about the FTC's privacy initiative are available on the web site **http://www.ftc.gov**

Source

FTC News Release, October 1999

Zero Tolerance Against Child Pornography

Experts and representatives from governments, the Internet industry, international organizations, hotlines and non-governmental organizations from around the world gathered in Vienna, Austria, in September at the conference "Combating Child Pornography on the Internet".

In the statement that was worked out and agreed on during the meeting, it is said that "We strongly support the further expansion of the Internet. At the same time, we must ensure and take action so that the Internet is free from crime and a safe place for our children".

The organizers of the conference – Austria, the United States of America and the European Commission – pledge to do their utmost to ensure concrete follow-up to and implementation of the recommendations of the conference, for example through international fora and organizations, in particular the EU, the Council of Europe, the G-8 and the UN.

The major recommendations can be summarized as follows:

1. Zero tolerance against child pornography on the Internet.
2. The need for a global partnership among all actors and stakeholders.
3. World wide criminalization of child pornography.
4. Strengthening law enforcement at national level and improving international co-operation among law enforcement agencies.
5. Closer co-operation and partnership between governments and the Internet industry.
6. The critical role of Hotlines or Tiplines.
7. Training and capacity building.
8. Raising awareness and empowerment of users.

Prior to the conference, the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Environment, Youth and Family Affairs invited young people from Europe, as well as NGOs, to discuss the issue of child pornography on the Internet. The results of this discussion were presented at the Vienna conference.

Source

Web site: http://www.stop-childporno.at

Innocence in Danger and the World Citizens' Movement

"Children must be educated to use their own critical sense in using the media and the Internet." This was agreed on at the meeting on actions to fight against child pornography and paedophilia on the Internet, which took place in June 1999 at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France. Over seventy individuals and representatives of non-governmental organisations participated in the discussions led by major foundations, Internet technicians and child specialists. The seminar aimed at improving knowledge of the way paedophile networks operate on the Internet and at defining solutions to this problem.

UNESCO's global Internet education and safety program is called *Innocence in Danger* and President is Ms. Homayra Sellier. In accordance with the Action Plan adopted at the January 1999 meeting on "Sexual Abuse of Children, Child Pornography and Paedophilia on the Internet", UNESCO in collaboration with its NGO partners has mobilised resources to work on: an electronic watchtower that will serve as a helpline to children; a book presenting all the themes discussed at the January conference; a special handbook for teachers and parents; a survey on legislation concerning child pornography and paedophilia on the Internet; and the creation of a group to work for long term strategies to make the Internet safe and child-friendly. This international group, the *World Citizens' Movement to Protect Innocence in Danger*, with personalities and leading citizens from all sectors of life, was organised at the June seminar.

Parry Aftab, cyberlawyer and head of the US Action Group of the Movement, has planned a program to highlight the most innovative educational use of the Internet. The program will also point out how the Internet can help children to communicate with other children world-wide. Information for parents about safe surfing advice and parental control options will be developed and distributed. A program will also be created to promote work with law enforcement and Internet watchdog groups to eliminate child pornography on the Internet, and to keep children safe from sexual exploitation online.

A seminar for the Balkan and Mediterranean countries is scheduled for December 1999.

Sources

Innocence in Danger, web site: http://www.unesco.org/webworld/innocence

More information also on:

UNESCO's web site:
http://www.unesco.org/webworld/highlights/innocence_010799.html
and Cyberangels: http://www.cyberangels.org/unescooverview.html

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InternetAction – Protecting Children in the Computer Age

There is cause to be concerned at the ease with which children can download explicit pornographic images of film clips and also with the way child sex abusers can use the Net to contact young victims.

The challenge of computerised child pornography and paedophilia on the Internet was raised at the international level at the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm in August 1996. 122 governments adopted an Agenda for Action in which they agreed to "...develop, strengthen and implement national laws to establish the criminal responsibility of service providers, customers and intermediaries..."

It is in this context that ECPAT,[1] an international NGO that took the initiative to hold the World Congress, is searching to find solutions. We have developed close collaboration with Interpol concerning the legal and law enforcement aspects of computerised child pornography. Furthermore, various national initiatives have been taken aiming at increased protection for minors.

InternetAction is an awareness-raising project developed by ECPAT Sweden targeting children aged 10-15, their teachers and parents. During the spring term of 1999, seventeen Swedish secondary schools have been involved in the project working with material consisting of a mouse-pad, a poster, a screen-saver and a brochure. The project was launched at a seminar at which representatives of the target groups participated. All products provide the user with 'Net smart rules':

- Never reveal your name, your home or e-mail address to unknown people you meet on the Net
- Never meet a chat mate alone the first time
- Never respond to e-mails unless you know who sent them
- Never open or download a file from someone you don't know
- Contact *rikskriminalpolisen@rkp.police.se* if you see child pornography on the Net

At the end of the school term, interviews were conducted with pupils and teachers concerning their views on the effects of working with the material and to what extent their awareness of the problem increased. The evaluation also addresses the influence of the project on the children's level of caution when working with the Internet. The overall outcome was very positive. The final report was handed over to the Ministry of Education in September requesting that the authorities reproduce the initiative to extend to all Swedish secondary schools.

by
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Note

1. ECPAT (End child prostitution, child pornography and trafficking in children for sexual purposes) is a global network of organisations and individuals working together for the elimination of child prostitution, child pornography and the trafficking of children for sexual purposes.

The 10th Anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

History of the Convention

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations by its resolution 44/25 of 20 November, 1989.

In 1979, the International Year of the Child, discussions started on a draft convention submitted by the Government of Poland. The international community had discussed children's issues before. Declarations on the rights of the child had been adopted by the League of Nations (1924) and the United Nations (1959), and provisions concerning children had been incorporated in a number of human rights and humanitarian law treaties. However, in many parts of the world children were suffering. They were abused, exploited and living under difficult circumstances. Several States argued that there was a need for a comprehensive statement on children's rights which would be binding under international law.

The unanimous adoption of the final, expanded Convention by the General Assembly paved the way for the next stage: ratification by States and the setting up of a monitoring committee. Within less than a year, by September 1990, twenty States had legally endorsed the Convention, which thereby entered into force. The Convention is

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now the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history. It has been ratified by all UN Member States with the exception of only two, USA and Somalia.

Sources

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Fact Sheet No.10 (Rev.1), The Rights of the Child, http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu6/2/fs10.htm

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), http://www.unicef.org/crc

International Meeting to Celebrate the CRC

A two-day commemorative meeting on the tenth anniversary of the CRC was held in Paris on September 30 to October 1, this year. The meeting was organized jointly by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, within the framework of the twenty-second session of the Committee. The main objectives of the meeting was to highlight major achievements and constraints in the implementation of the Convention, and to identify measures needed to improve implementation in the future.

Participants in the meeting were the United Nations specialized agencies, representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations, and children from different parts of the world, of whom some suggested that a world parliament for children should be created. The children also stressed that national measures concerning children should take their views into account.

One of the recommendations at the meeting was that the Committee should seek the support of key international leaders, and in particular the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the President of the World Bank, to examine how macro-economic and fiscal policies impact on children's rights, and how those policies could be reformed to make them more beneficial to the well-being of children.

Source

Press releases from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, web site: http://www.unhchr.ch

Note

Papers that have been submitted to the meeting are available on the web site of Child Rights Information Network: http://www.crin.org/crc/ani.htm

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Stipulates Four General Principles:

- States shall ensure that each child enjoys full rights without discrimination or distinctions of any kind;
- The child's best interests shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children whether undertaken by public or private social institutions, courts, administrative authorities or legislative bodies;
- Every child has an inherent right to life and States shall ensure, to the maximum extent possible, child survival and development;
- Children have the right to be heard.

Celebrations Around the World

Many events around the world are celebrating the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A data base with events in different countries is available on the web site of CRIN: http://www.crin.org

Some examples:

1. To celebrate and reach children internationally, Voices of Youth, EPP, and the Canadian National Committee for UNICEF have designed a "Children's Rights Referendum" online, http://www.unicef.org/voy/meeting/rig/crc.html

The referendum invites children to vote on the rights that are most in need of protection in their communities and countries, and to use the "referendum" discussion forum to talk about the reasons for their votes, including comparing notes with their peers elsewhere in the world.

2. Kuleana, a Children's Rights Centre in Tanzania, has launched the Code of Conduct, a government document on child domestic workers. The event took place on November 10. The document directs that nobody should employ a child below the age of 14, when a child is expected to have completed primary education. It also clarifies the working conditions for domestic workers, which include total number of working hours in a week and number of working days in a week.

3. The radio campaign "I am a Child but I have my Rights, too!", has been recorded by children and professional comedians to promote the rights of the child. This initiative of PLAN International, Region of West Africa, includes twenty stories that are being broadcast in Burkina Faso, Togo and Guinea from May 1999 to May 2000.

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The Oslo Challenge

• Once the world was flat, then it was round. Now it's media-shaped, and we want people to tune in, beam up, log on, download – however they tap into the wonders of the global media, we want them to do it with the rights of children in mind.

• We want to harness the amazing positive power of the media – in all its forms – so that our children will have a richer, safer tomorrow.

• In November 1999, a call will go out to individual and groups all over the world to be part of this inclusive engagement – a process where no-one is excluded, but everyone can find a role to play in meeting the Oslo Challenge.

What Is the Oslo Challenge?
It's a challenge to everyone engaged in exploring, developing, monitoring, defining, directing and participating in the complex relationship between children and the media to ensure that the overwhelming power of the media for good in the lives of children is identified, encouraged and supported, while the potential harmful effects are recognized and reduced. But it is more than a declaration; the call to action is the first step in implementing a process aimed at developing the full potential of the relationship between children and the media.

When Will It Happen?
The Challenge will be launched on 20 November 1999 – the 10th anniversary of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* – by the Norwegian Government and UNICEF.

In the days leading to the launch, a mixed group of media professionals, young people, UN and voluntary sector workers, researchers and creative thinkers will meet in Oslo to brainstorm around Article 17 of the Convention, which explicitly recognizes "the important function performed by the mass media". They will focus on five topics central to the relationship between children and the media:

- children's access to the media,
- media education,
- how children participate in the media,
- how they can be protected from harm, and
- what the role of the media is in protecting and promoting children's best interests.

So What's New?
This will not be a meeting for the sake of meeting: its aim is to map what's been done and what potential remains untapped; compile examples of good ideas; launch a political process that will keep the relationship between children and the media firmly on the agenda; bring together people who will take up the challenge and open the floodgates so that the innovation, creativity and rich potential of the global media are reflected in the ideas that come out of the gathering.

What Happens After November?
What we shall do is bring the ideas together into tools that can be used by others – a resource pack full of ideas; a checklist for the Committee on the Rights of the Child to use to challenge governments reporting to them; a UN process that will position this issue among others that will shape the future; a committed cohort of people who will bring in others, spread the ideas, take the Challenge further. The launch of the Oslo Challenge will, we hope, bring many others into the process – including media professionals, children and young people themselves. They will take the process forward and find new ways to meet the Oslo Challenge.

November 1999 will be just the beginning.

For more information about the Oslo Challenge, please contact:
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or Bilge Bassani, UNICEF, New York
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E-mail: bbassani@unicef.org

Deadline for contributions to the next issue of this newsletter is January 30, 2000

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Coming Events

Sexual Abuse of Children and Paedophilia on the Internet

ATHENS, GREECE, DECEMBER 2-3, 1999

This regional conference for the Balkan and Mediterranean region is organised by the Foundation for the Child and the Family in co-operation with UNESCO, the World Citizens' Movement for Protection of Innocence in Danger, and the Foundation pour l'Enfance. The aims are: to examine the different legislations at the European level, provide useful information based on the latest research, underline the needs and the recent problems occurred by the effects of new technology, especially the Internet, and propose solutions and strategies for the prevention of dangers and the protection of children.

Contact: Foundation for the Child and the Family
Herodou Attikou 12A, 151 24 Marousi
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Tel: +301 8094 419, Fax: +301 8094 484
E-mail: childfamily@netor.gr
Web site: http://www.childfamily.gr

A Toast to Bread and Butter

WASHINGTON, DC., USA, DECEMBER 9-11, 1999

The American Center for Children and Media, together with the Goethe-Institut/Washington and PRIX JEUNESSE, Germany, are organizing a conference that will offer screenings and discussion of "bread and butter" programming from North America and Europe. This is defined as regularly-scheduled programming that is the foundation of a broadcaster's children's schedule. It is usually daily or weekly, and has often run for years. The conference will also feature children's "blocks," extended schedules that combine programs and other elements. These shows are seldom featured at festivals, markets or summits.

The event is open to any broadcaster or producer.

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Children's Day of Broadcasting

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1999

Kids are changing the world! The International Children's Day of Broadcasting is an occasion to recognize children around the world as agents of positive change. With over 2,000 broadcasters taking part, the Day is an opportunity for children to shape their own vision of the world, through radio and television.

UNICEF is announcing the formation of a Special Broadcasters Group, drawing together the talents of leading broadcasters from around the world to help children become more effective communicators.

In 1998, the International Council/UNICEF Award went to Brazil's TV Cultura, which had produced over 16 hours of original programming for the Day.

Contact: William Hetzer
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Web site: http://www.unicef.org/icdb

Asian Children's Media Forum

DHAKA, BANGLADESH, MARCH 12-13, 2000

Preceding the Second Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media (see below), a two-day Forum will allow child advocates and child journalists from Asian countries to voice their thoughts about media and its contents. During the Summit there will be a session where the outcomes of the Children's Media Forum can be presented and incorporated.

The aims of the Forum are:

a) to share and exchange experiences among child advocate, print or broadcast journalists and with adult media professionals;

b) to suggest good practices in covering children and children's issues in the media; and,

c) to report on highlights of the Summit to children back home.

A continuing exchange and networking among child journalists in Asia is hoped to be one of the outcomes of the Forum. The Forum is also expected to initiate the establishment of an in-country mechanism for planned exchange with and learning from adult media professionals.

For further information, see contact details below.

Second Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media

DHAKA, BANGLADESH, MARCH 14-16, 2000

About 200 participants from 27 countries in East, South-East and South Asia are expected to attend the Second Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media. The Summit will be co-hosted by the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Women's & Children's Affairs, Government of Bangladesh. The National Organising Committee also includes the UNICEF Office for Bangladesh.

The main theme of the Summit is "Investing in Children in the New Century". The objectives are:

1. To increase understanding of the need for sustained investment in realizing child rights;
2. To review the progress made in Asia in meeting the Goals set out at the World Summit for Children;
3. To examine how media report on children's issues and cater to children's needs;
4. To identify activities that will enhance media's leadership role, including child participation in the media;
5. To share examples of best practices among the media, towards standards setting for quality reporting on children's and women's issues.

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SUMMIT 2000: Children, Youth and the Media – Beyond the Millennium

TORONTO, CANADA, MAY 13-17, 2000

SUMMIT 2000 will be an opportunity for those who create and distribute media television, film and new media for young people, to meet with media educators from around the world.

The conference program will consist of three pillars:

- Media section – with topics such as: creative development, global business, social issues, changing technology, and research and education.
- Media education section – workshops, panels and papers on themes such as: marketing to youth audiences, media and multiculturalism, reading audiences, identity and cyberspace, debates in media education, television's representation of young people, etc.
- Academic section – with papers related to media and media education.

Registration packages will be available in late 1999.

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Web site: http://www.summit2000.net

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PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL

MUNICH, GERMANY, MAY 31–JUNE 6, 2000

The PRIX JEUNESSE Foundation was established with the aim to contribute to improving world-wide television for the young, to deepen understanding, to promote communication between nations and to increase the international program exchange. For this purpose a festival is held bi-annually.

Producers, executives and researchers from around the world are welcome to this international children's television festival, to watch children's programmes, discuss them and vote in the competition. UNICEF, UNESCO and BMW are sponsoring special prizes.

Contact: PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL
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Web site: http://www.prixjeunesse.de

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AGORA 2000

THESSALONIKI, GREECE, JUNE 23–26, 2000

The annual children's media event AGORA arranged by E.C.T.C. (European Children's Television Centre) attracts heads of children's television departments from many countries, as well as producers, distributors, researchers, academics and new media professionals.

AGORA 2000 will also work as a preparatory station for the Third World Summit on Media for Children, Greece, 2001. AGORA includes the "Kids for Kids Video Festival" for children's own productions.

Contact: E.C.T.C.
20, Analipseos Str., Vrilissia
152 35 Athens, Greece
Tel: +301 68 51 258, Fax: +301 68 17 987
E-mail: ects16@hol.kapatel.gr

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International Summer Institute 2000: Media Education

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, JULY 3–21, 2000

This year's summer institute at the Institute of Education, University of London, will offer:

- A lively, coherent, practical introduction to media education
- Presentations by internationally recognised experts in the field
- Visits to schools and youth projects to see media teaching in practice
- Student led production projects using digital technology
- Recognition by University of London for credit transfer
- A busy social programme

The Institute of Education is the UK's leading graduate school of education. It has a long track record of involvement in media education, via professional development courses, doctoral research and major funded projects.

Contact: Dr. David Buckingham
Reader in Education, Institute of Education
University of London, 20 Bedford Way
London WC1H 0AL, United Kingdom
Fax: +44 171 612 6177
E-mail: teonddb@mentor.ioe.ac.uk

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Media Education Research Section of IAMCR

SINGAPORE, JULY 15–20, 2000

The International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) will hold its 22nd general assembly and annual conference, which is being jointly organized by the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC) and the School of Communication Studies at Nanyang Technological University.

Contact for the Media Education Research Section:
Dr. Keval J. Kumar, Resource Centre for Media Education and Research
4 Chintamani Apts, Kale Path, Bhandarkar Rd.
Pune 411004, India
Tel/Fax: +91 20 565 1018
E-mail: kevalkumar@hotmail.co
Web site of the conference: http://www.mcc.mq.edu.au/courses/ICP/iamcr/iamcr.htm

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27th IBBY World Congress: The New World for a New World – Children's Books for the New Millennium

CARTAGENA DE INDIAS, COLOMBIA, SEPTEMBER 18–22, 2000

IBBY's (International Board on Books for Young People) biennial congresses are the most important meeting points for IBBY members and other people involved in children's books and reading.

Contact: Silvia Castrillon, Fundalectura
Colombian Section of IBBY
Apartado 048902, Av. 3 Calle 1-40, No 16-46
Bogotá D.C., Colombia
Tel: +57 1 320 15 11, Fax +57 1 287 70 71
E-mail: fundalec@impsat.net.co
Web site: http://www.ibby.org

Second International Forum of Researchers: Young People and the Media – Tomorrow, Issues and Outlook.

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, NOV. 27–DEC. 1, 2000

Year 2000 Forum will provide a forum for dialogue and interaction between members of the research community and those groups, such as regulators, producers and educators, which use the results of the studies. Themes of the Forum are: globalization and socialization, policy and regulation of media for young people, approaches to research methodologies, and youth production and consumption of media.

Registration for the Forums will be from early 2000.

Contact: Research Section, Australian Broadcasting Authority, Year 2000 Forum
P.O. Box Q500, Queen Victoria Building
Sydney, NSW 1230, Australia
Tel: +61 2 9334 7700, Fax +61 2 9334 7799
E-mail: year2000forum@aba.gov.au
Web site: http://www.aba.gov.au

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Third World Summit on Media for Children

THESSALONIKI, GREECE, MARCH 11–15, 2001

The 3rd World Summit on Media for Children brings together audio-visual professionals from around the world and aims at the creation of an audio-visual policy supporting the rights of children.

The themes of the Summit are:

- Going global – policies and decision making, shaping the audio-visual future
- Media for all – emerging economies and regions with less opportunities facing the new millennium
- What's new – promising new technologies
- Children have a say – children's audio-visual rights, audio-visual education

Media Talks on Children is an on-line service for preparation of the Summit, see the web site: http://www.children-media.org/mediatalks/index_es.html

Contact: Alexandros Athanasiadis
European Children's Television Centre
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152 35 Athens, Greece
Tel: +30 1 68 51 258, Fax: +30 1 68 17 987
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New Literature

THANK YOU FOR SENDING PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION

Considine, David M.; Haley, Gail E.: *Visual Messages : Integrating Imagery into Construction. A Teacher Resource for Media Literacy.* Englewood, Teacher Ideas Press, 1999, 385 p., ill.

Cronström, Johan: *Gränslöst : Om TV, våld och ansvar.* [Whithout limits : Television, violence and responsibility.] Stockholm, Ministry of Culture, Council of Media Violence, 1999, 166 p. + app. 16 p., tab., fig., bibl., (Våldsskildringsrådet; 21), ISSN 1102-447X. In Swedish.

Drotner, Kirsten: *Unge, medier og modernitet : pejlinger i et foranderligt landskab.* [Young people, media and modernity.] Copenhagen, Borgen, 1999, 279 p., fig., ill., tab., bibl., (Skriftserie fra Center for Ungdomsmedier; 5). ISBN 87 21-01100-1. In Danish.

Dwyer, Tim; Stockbridge, Sally: Putting Violence to Work in New Media Policies: Trends in Australian Internet, Computer Game and Video Regulation. *New Media and Society* 1(1999)2, ISSN 1461-4448, pp. 227-249.

Expert Meeting on : Sexual Abuse of Children, Child Pornography and Paedophilia on the Internet : An International Challenge. Paris, UNESCO, 1999, 25 p. + app. 5 p., (Final report).

Gottberg, Joachim von: Vom Bildschirm Verzogen? : Die Bedeutung des Fernsehens im Jugendalter. *TV diskurs : Verantwortung in audiovisuellen Medien* 7(1999)Januar, spec.issue.

Kremar, Marina; Valkenburg, Patti M.: A Scale to Assess Children's Moral Interpretations of Justified and Unjustified Violence and Its Relationship to Television Viewing. *Communication Research*, 26(1999)5, pp. 608-634.

La televisión y los niños en Chile : Percepciones desde la audiencia infantil. Santiago, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Escuela de Psicología, 1999, 126 p. + app. 15 p., (Estudios Consejo Nacional de Television).

Livingstone, Sonia; Bovill, Moira: *Young People New Media.* Final report of the project, 'Children, Young People and the Changing Media Environment'. London, London School of Economics, 1999, 400 p.

Lykke Christensen, Christa (ed.): *Børn, Unge og Medier.* [Children, youth and the media.] Göteborgs Universitet, Nordicom, 1999, 307 p., tab., fig., ISBN 91-630-8326-4.

Morrison, David E. (ed.); MacGregor, Brent; Svennevig, Michael; Firmstone, Julie: *Defining Violence : The Search for Understanding.* Luton, Bedfordshire, University of Luton Press, 1999, 140 p. + app. 9 p., tab., ISBN 1-86020-568-2 (Institute of Communication Studies; University of Leeds).

Nathanson, Amy I.: Identifying and Explaining the Relationship between Parental Mediation and Children's Aggression. *Communication Research* 26(1999)2, ISSN 00936502, pp. 125-143.

Prantner, Thomas; Bollardt, Gerhard (eds.); e.a.: *Gewalt im TV.* Wien, Verlag Carl Ueberreuter GmbH, 1999, 222 p., ISBN 3-8000-3753-X.

Ralph, Sue; Lees Tim; Langham Brown, Jo: *Youth and the Global Media.* Papers from the 29th University of Manchester Broadcasting Symposium, Luton, Bedfordshire, University of Luton Press, 1999, 256 p., ISBN 1-86020 564 X.

Sanmartín, Jose (ed): *Violencia contra niños.* Barcelona, Editorial Ariel, S.A., 1999, 222 p., ISBN 84-344-7468-9.

Schell, Fred: *Aktive Medienarbeit mit Jugendlichen : Theorie und Praxis.* München, Institut Jugend Film Fernsehen, Reihe Medienpädagogik, Band 5, 1999, 252 p., ISBN 3-929061-85-6.

Schorb, Bernd; Stiehler, Hans-Jörg (eds.): *Idealisten oder Realisten? Die deutschen Kinder- und Jugendfernsehmacherinnen und ihre subjectiven Medientheorien.* München, Edition TelevIZIon, 1999, 192 p., ISBN 3-929061-53-8. (Internationalen Zentralinstitut für das Jugend- und Bildungsfernsehen.)

Stanger, Jeffrey D; Gridina, Natalia: *Media in the Home 1999 : The Fourth Annual Survey of Parents and Children.* The Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania, Survey Series No. 5, 1999, 30 p. Note: Available on-line, http://appcpenn.org/kidstv99/survey5.htm

Tufte, Birgitte: *Børn og tv-reklam.* [Children and television commercials.] København, Danmarks lærerhøjskole, 1999, 67 p. + app 5 p. In Danish.

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

The Nordic Information Center for Media and Communication Research (Nordicom) has set up an international clearinghouse on children and violence on the screen. The Clearinghouse receives financial support from the Government of Sweden and UNESCO.

The Clearinghouse is to contribute to and effectivize knowledge on children, young people and media violence, seen in the perspective of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The prime task is to make new knowledge and data known to prospective users all over the world.

The International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen informs various groups of users – about

- research findings concerning children, young people and media violence,
- ongoing research on children and media violence,
- children's access to mass media and their media use,
- training and courses of study on children and the media,
- positive alternatives to media violence, and
- measures and activities which aim to limit gratuitous violence on television, in films, and in interactive media.

The object of the Clearinghouse is three-fold: to attract attention to the question of violence on the screen and its role in the lives of children and young people, to stimulate initiatives and activities to combat gratuitous violence, and to help provide a better basis for policy in the field.

The Clearinghouse is user-oriented, which means that our services are offered in response to demand and are adapted to the needs of our clients.

The Clearinghouse publishes a newsletter and a yearbook.

The Clearinghouse is located at Nordicom

NORDICOM is an organ of co-operation between the Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The overriding goal and purpose is to make the media and communication efforts under-taken in the Nordic countries known, both throughout and far beyond our part of the world.

NORDICOM uses a variety of channels – newsletters, journals, books, databases – to reach researchers, students, decision-makers, media practitioners, journalists, teachers and interested members of the general public.

NORDICOM works to establish and strengthen links between the Nordic research community and colleagues in all parts of the world, both by means of unilateral flows and by linking individual researchers, research groups and institutions.

NORDICOM also documents media trends in the Nordic countries. The joint Nordic information addresses users in Europe and further afield. The production of comparative media statistics forms the core of this service.

NORDICOM is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

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The UNESCO
International Clearinghouse
on Children and Violence on the Screen

Göteborg University

Nordic Council of Ministers

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